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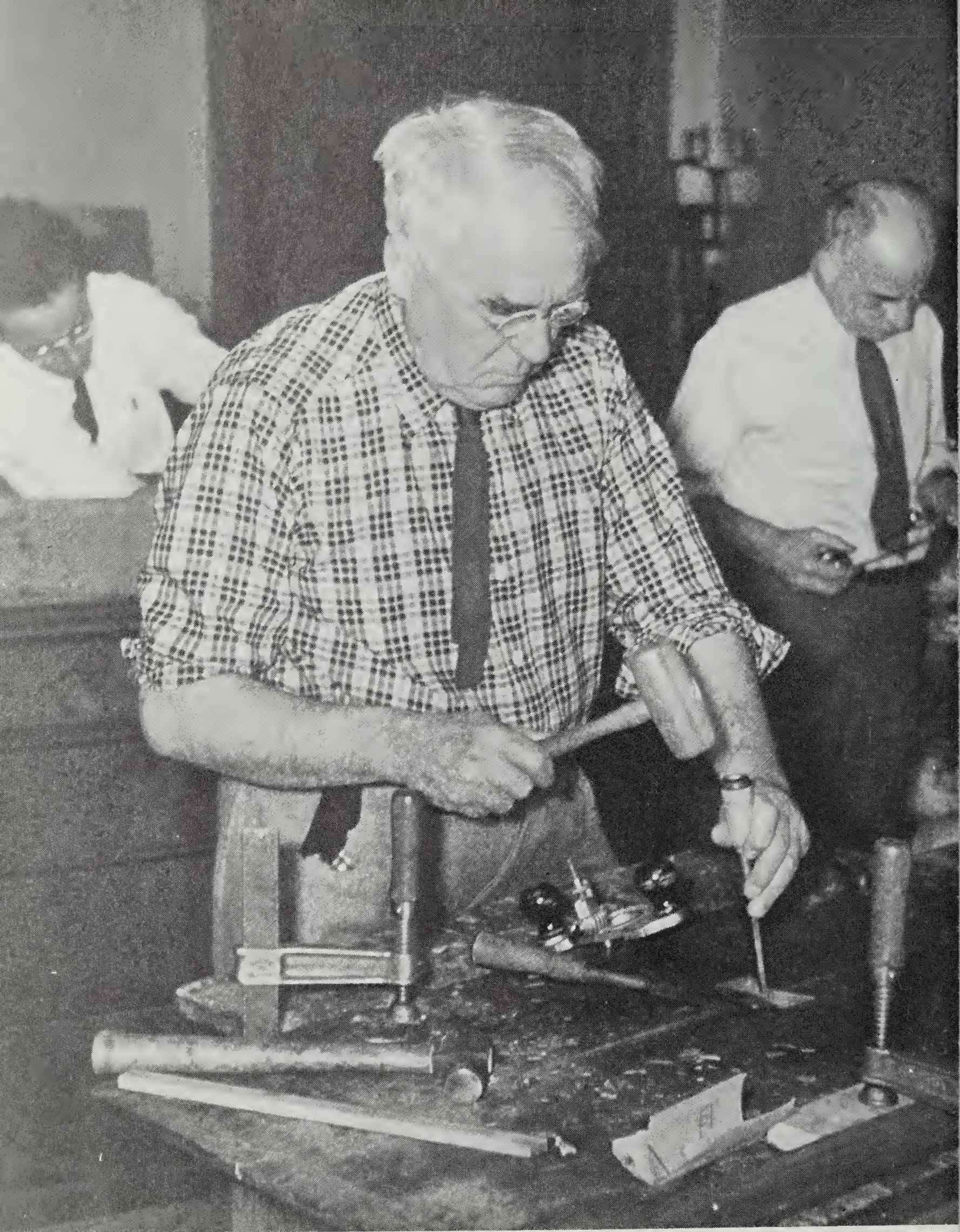
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The essays, etc., appearing in the issues of this journal will, for the most part, be derived from the work of seminar students, alumni, and members of the staff of The Barnes Foundation Art Department. On occasion, we shall publish articles and pieces not directly concerned with the Foundation's philosophy but representing original work by the Art Department's students and outside contributors which the editorial staff considers to be of general interest to VISTAS readers. VISTAS will be published twice a year.



The Barnes Foundation Workshop
in the 1940s

Philip Jenney

Dr. Albert C. Barnes
(1872-1951)
Founder of The Barnes Foundation

Albert Nulty

VISTA S

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No. 1

Transferred Values

Part II*

by VIOLETTE DE MAZIA**

THE artist, we say, creates; the inventor invents. Yet we know, too, that neither one nor the other creates, invents, in the outright sense of the term. They do not because they cannot—as no human being can—bring about anything entirely isolated in its novelty from what already exists.

The identity of an invented thing and of any “creative” work is basically the result of a re-directing, an imaginative modification, a relating anew and an adapting of materials, meanings, qualities that have occurred. The goal itself, for the sake of which the re-directing is performed, has its roots in goals previously sought or attained: a comparison of Cyrano’s trip to the moon and that made by modern scientists or of Icarus’ and Leonardo’s schemes for man’s soaring aloft obviously reflects a difference in the developed technology to be drawn upon at the time, but it equally bespeaks a continuing, or inherited, interest in the same general objective. That is to say, the past, in some form, in some manner and some degree of conspicuous-

* This is the second of a series of articles on the general topic of Transferred Values. The first article was published in the Autumn, 1978, issue of *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, (The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion Station, PA.), pp. 3–33. Some of the material of both essays was originally presented by the author in class lectures at The Barnes Foundation.

** Director of Education of The Barnes Foundation Art Department.

ness, is ever-present and, by necessity, always contributes its share to the significance and the identity of the “invented,” the “created,” the “new,” whatever the level of distinction the inventiveness itself possesses.

Thus is the present the past’s consequence: the here-and-now re-awakens and re-discovers what has been, keeps it alive and helps to bring it up-to-date and to fruition. And the present is the harbinger of the future: it heralds, foreshadows and initiates what will be and sets the stage for that to emerge and unfold and to proceed to become a new present and a new past—this whether one considers the present to be non-existent as such or believes that the present is the only state of things given to us to experience and is, therefore, the only constant thing we are able to sense.

Correspondingly, in the field of art—be it painting, sculpture, music, choreography, literature, and so on—a work stands, of course, as the entity it is, with its particular constituents specifically related to each other and expressive of a “unique” set of qualities that make it the “unique” entity it is. Nonetheless, this “new,” “unique,” entity stands also both as a re-incarnation and as a prophecy—a re-incarnation of elements, meanings, etc., that have already been brought about and a prophecy of elements, meanings, etc., that may be derived from what this entity now discloses.

Such, in fact, is the story of the intellectual evolution of humankind and, in art, of the traditions. No more and no less than in any other aspect of our lives does any aspect of art, does any “created” work, occur alone, in isolation from, with no relation to, other aspects and works that preceded it. Since this, in the world as we know it, cannot but be, it means that what we term “transferred values” or “transferred qualities” cannot but be—and irrefutably so—ever-present. The past, indeed, makes the present possible, for it is in the past, in the traditions, that the present finds the basis of, the source material for, its own “new” methods, treatments, substance. And, by that token, the past, the known, sheds light upon the meaning of the present or the “new.” In that sense it is that transferred

values are one with, for they make up the very substance of, the process of perception and of creativeness—in art as elsewhere—and, because of the nature and action of transferred values, fundamentals are perpetuated and conclusions are impermanent.

In our previous essay on the topic of Transferred Values,* we established three major points about their nature. The first is that they involve a transfer of *values*, not of things: the dried-up twigs, etc., in Arcimboldo's picture illustrated on Plate 36 do not represent a case of transferred values, since it is not that the "head" has qualities that belong to dried twigs, etc., but that the "head" is *made out of* dried twigs, etc., which are shown as such. In contrast to this, the gnarled tree roots recorded by the camera of J. E. Santa Maria (Plate 37), while retaining their identity as tree roots, do take on meanings, qualities, of other things, as, for example, a bull calf, hence do represent a case of transferred values. This is also true of the curving, denuded trees in Jean Hugo's "*Le Perroquet Vert*" (Plate 11), which express, along with the meaning of trees, the additional meaning of such things as dancing, willowy witches or Jane Avril as Toulouse-Lautrec depicted her in one of his posters (Plate 68).

The second factor about the nature of transferred values which we emphasized earlier is that, since imagination acts in the bringing of transferred values into being, the imagination of the spectator, the listener, the reader is called upon, required, by the result. And, thirdly, we demonstrated also that transferred values exist as such only when the characteristics of one object or situation are used as a *means* to enrich and make specific the identity of something else and, conversely, that, when what is made to pass as and is mistaken for transferred values is made to serve as an *end*—as with Michelangelo's "Delphic Sybil" (Plate 39) in relation to architecture and sculpture or with Stokowski's imposition of a Wagnerian grandiloquence on the scores of Bach—the result is a "looks-like," make-

* *Ibid.*

believe or camouflage. Neither the Michelangelo example nor the Stokowski is a case of transferred values: the former is merely an attempt at a more or less literal re-production of the features of architecture and sculpture,* and the latter, a murdering of Bach by drowning him in Wagner.

It goes without saying that there is a whole hierarchy of transferred values, ranging from the obvious to the subtle, from the sensuously attractive to the profoundly expressive, from the clear and simple to the complex and rich, from the superficial and trifling to the deeply moving and significant, from the sparse to the abundant, and so on. To illustrate this fact, we propose to examine their occurrence and action—*i.e.*, the effects of figurative perception and expression—in the work of artists quite different from each other.

With “Landscape with Goat” (Plate 41),† by Alexis Gritchenko, for instance, our eyes readily register the subject facts of landscape and goat, but these recognizable components do not give us what the picture, as a picture, is or says. We may observe in it the presence of architecture, yet the painting could not in any way be described as architectonic, as we could use the term to describe many of the works of Cézanne, even those in which the main subject facts are figures or apples (*e.g.*, Plates 19 and 30).

An artist, as any human being, sees, feels, experiences in the light of what he has seen, felt, experienced in nature and in the work of others. In the case of “Landscape with Goat,” Gritchenko experienced the landscape that served as the subject source, and, in the process of experiencing it, he transferred into it qualities, characteristics he had experienced in and learned from a number of other

* See also Violette de Mazia, “Transferred Values,” *Autumn*, 1978, pp. 14–15.

† Painted in Greece in 1921.

situations—qualities of water color, as an example, into what is possibly encaustic or gouache.*

Elements from the work of Cézanne were also experienced—not Cézanne's color nor its density nor the architectonic monumentality Cézanne expresses, but the general character of the structure, the skeletal, angular pattern of the framework of his paintings, his interlocking of planes, particularly as these are seen in his mature work (*e.g.*, Plate 71)—which Gritchenko transferred into an entity marked by a light-in-weight substance that partakes of the delicacy and the transparency of a filmy textile such as, for instance, gauze,† all of which characteristics come in to qualify the Cézannesque features as well as the landscape itself.

Linear pattern in the Gritchenko is delicately crisp, and it divides the picture area into daintily sharp, angular shapes—a use of line found in a number of early Byzantine works (*e.g.*, Plate 40)—which suggest, by way of transferred values, the piling up of small boxes or a house of cards. Thus, for all its evocation of Cézanne, nothing about the painting is robust or powerful. Instead, it is a fragile construction of slight units in an apparently precarious equilibrium that nevertheless holds, as long, so to speak, as we hold our breath. And the balance, precarious though it be, is helped on its way by the tenuous, yet positive, equilibrizing action of the vertical elements at the left of center in the foreground, at the upper center and

* In 1958, when Gritchenko visited The Barnes Foundation, we thought our chance had finally come to find out precisely what medium he had used for these small early panels. Accordingly, while standing before one of the works in question, we asked him with all the nonchalance we could muster, "By the way, what medium did you use here?" Not in the least taken in, he immediately replied, "That's the question Dr. Barnes asked me in 1923." Though he said not another word about the medium itself, he did volunteer that the surfaces were pieces of cardboard from Finland that were used, in the 'twenties, by professional laundries in the packaging of men's shirts.

† We might perceive the transparent quality of some filmy textile also in, for example, Renoir's landscape "Spring" (Plate 8), but, now, perhaps as of gauze or tulle which is embroidered here and there with small tufts of delicately colorful silks.

upper right and of the zigzagging lines in the sky that assist in keeping our eye within the picture boundaries by countering, in their pull towards the upper left, the slant of the landscape towards the upper right.

Further differentiating it from Cézanne, there are in the Gritchenko piece fewer planes than are to be found in Cézanne's canvasses, and the planes themselves are treated more as single constituent units of a pattern in compressed, deep space than as constructive elements, as planes are in Cézanne, of solid, weighty, massive color volumes.

With our observation of Gritchenko's handling of the Cézannesque planes, we come to yet another discovery. This is the presence of a feature that is distinctive of and that crystallized in Analytical Cubism (*e.g.*, Plate 21), the first established stage of Cubism—namely, the geometric patterning of planes in shallow depth with a grayish-brown tonality that Gritchenko transfers into the expression of his experience of the landscape. Also transferred into what says landscape is a treatment of units characteristic of African sculpture (*e.g.*, Plate 57), which, together with Cézanne's "slicing" of volumes and other distortions, led to Cubism—*viz.*, the constructive principle of dismembering entities into their component units and reorganizing them on the basis of a created rhythm of volumes and planes rather than on the basis of the relationships existing among the original subject facts. And this dis-location and the re-allocation of components in a compact, rhythmic, in-and-out activity of volumes and planes, as in African sculpture and Cubism, also come in, in the Gritchenko, as transferred values. Differences from the sources are to be noted: in contrast to Cubism, Gritchenko retains more of the known identity and relationships of the subject units; and, in contrast to African sculpture, the constructive principle of dis-locating and re-allocating does not occur in a context of sculptural meanings, for the units in the Gritchenko are not at all either sculpture-like or sculptural. It is, in fact, a measure of Gritchenko's sensitivity and ingenuity as an artist-painter that he was able to make a creative use of African sculpture for his

very unsculpturesque and unsculpture-like picture interests.*

We have used a number of transferred values as a means of expressing, of making clear and precise, what we get from the Gritchenko picture. And Gritchenko himself, we may fairly state, used, consciously to whatever extent, transferred values of the same sort that we did for the sake of making clear and precise the character of his aesthetic experience of the landscape.† In other words, he used them to objectify, in terms of qualities of his medium, that new actuality, that “third” thing,‡ born as he experienced his subject with *his* interests, feelings, imagination, background, etc., on that particular occasion. As a result of what he did and of what we did and of what we are able to do as we look with our interests, intelligence, imagination and feelings and in the light of a relevant background, the subject that we identified at the start has been enriched and made specific by such broad human values as, for instance, a particular kind of crispness, of delicacy, of dynamic activity, of decorativeness, and so on. And it all became *this* picture, with its own novel individuality, be-

* For an explanation of the difference between sculpture-like and sculpturesque, see Violette de Mazia, “Transferred Values,” *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, Autumn, 1978, p. 15. African sculpture is fully three-dimensional—indeed, to a much greater degree than is, in general, Greek sculpture, which latter, more often than not, strongly relies, for the three-dimensionality of the piece, on the expressiveness of its silhouette (*e.g.*, Plate 55), even when the piece is outstandingly blocky (*e.g.*, Plate 54), rather than, as does African sculpture (*e.g.*, Plates 56 and 57), on the dynamic three-dimensional relationships among the subsidiary component volumes. This stressed expressiveness of the outline in Greek statuary, usually accompanied by a stressing, too, of the frontal—shoulder to shoulder or, in profiled reliefs, nose to ear—axial plane (in contrast to African figures in which the two main axial planes at right angle to each other are equally emphasized or else, of the two, the one in depth is given greater proportionate prominence) and by great subtlety in the modeling of the piece thus outlined, is to be found also in the profiled heads on early Greek coins (*e.g.*, Plate 58) and is referred to, later, in profiled portraits in the Italian Renaissance (*e.g.*, Plate 59) that were influenced by early Greek sculpture.

† Our justification is to be found in the above-cited article, pp. 31–32.

‡ *I.e.*, not what was—the subject, the landscape; not the artist’s feelings about what was; but the new, the third, situation that arose from the artist’s interacting with that subject.

cause of the fact that Gritchenko's personality was engaged in the successful expression of a genuine experience.*

Markedly different from the broad human qualities embodied in the Gritchenko just examined, and from its transferred values, are those expressed by the artist Chaim Soutine in "Gourdon"† (Fold-out Plate 70), one of Soutine's most outstandingly successful early paintings. Our intention is to show what the picture is and can mean by way of transferred values on the part of the artist as he painted it and on our part as we react and respond to it—to show, that is, the rôle played by the transferred values used by Soutine / used by us / in his making the picture be what it is, mean what it means / in our seeing the picture for what it is and means.

The first question that comes to mind for most viewers when standing in front of such a picture is, "What is it?" The painter Thomas Hart Benton answered by saying, "It is a mass of paint smudges by a crazy man." Our answer is not so easy to come by, for we intend to perceive what it is that those "paint smudges" actually are, do and convey. Our initial step in this effort is to attempt to classify something about the canvas with what we already know: we may not be able yet to fathom what Soutine says, but we may be able to recognize what he says it *about*. Even in the end, that will help, for we will get more of Soutine's meaning by getting it more specifically, just as we will know more about sweetness if we can associate the quality with something specific, such as "sugar" or "Peggy Jones," rather than merely attach it to a nebulous "it." Thus, in our

* It might be interesting to look at another painting by Gritchenko, "Turks at a Café" (Plate 42), executed in Constantinople (now Istanbul) a couple of years prior to "Landscape with Goat." Another picture statement, another set of transferred values: simplicity, boldness, decorative drama and, for the sake of these qualities, features distinctive of Manet and Matisse borrowed and transferred into a distinctively Gritchenko kind of picturesque illustration.

† Painted in the French Maritime Alps about 1923.

seeing of the Soutine, we can start with what the work retains that gives us a clue to recognizing what the subject was.

Often in Soutine, the identity of the subject is somewhat difficult to determine. If we are not able to ascertain what it was that an artist chose or accepted as his subject, we may become puzzled, disturbed, frustrated, and people frequently dismiss such presentations then and there at the very first step. But even if, with Soutine, we get over this hurdle and, in "Gourdon," recognize tree, house, angry sky at Gourdon in the South of France or elsewhere, or even horse or waterfall, that were not there, the first question, "What is it?" (by which most viewers mean, "What was its subject?"), may yield to the shock of bewilderment and disgust because, now that we recognize what the subject was, we are aware of the violent liberties taken with the known characteristics of the things we recognize. That is to say, we are disturbed by the gross departures from the subject facts; and there are departures here at every turn, from every point of perception—departures in shape, in color, in linear boundary, in modeling, in relationships in space.

Such departures should shock us less now than when we first saw Soutine's work or first began "learning to see," for we have found that one of the primary things we should train ourselves to do in learning how to read a work of art is to consider that work as a new object, with its own characteristics, and to look for that and *its* meanings as such. Yet, its subject, which we recognize to this or that extent, does figure in the artist's statement, the picture, because—while it is true that the artist objectifies not what was, but the new situation that comes into being as he experienced what was (that is why it is new and personal)—that statement owes its existence and character in part to the nature of what in the world he experienced. This explains why the individuality coming from the artist can interest us, *i.e.*, because it reveals something new about the world we know in our own way and not, as some people would have us believe and some self-styled "artists"

pretend, something exclusive to the artist. Art is personal, but not private.

The fact, moreover, that the subject was chosen by the artist, or accepted by him, is important: as those of us who paint, carve or write know, qualities can be felt or perceived about certain subjects—a landscape, for instance—that cannot be felt or perceived so specifically or at all about a different subject—a figure or even another landscape. It is also true that, because of one's personality, one is able to express certain qualities as experienced in one type of subject that another artist might express about a very different subject. A case in point is Renoir, who, on occasion, expresses more successfully qualities we associate with flowers when he uses a subject other than flowers, the head of a girl (*e.g.*, Plates 26 and 47), for instance, than he does when the subject was actually flowers (*e.g.*, Plate 46).

With "Gourdon," Soutine can express what broad human values he does express, in part, exactly because he used that landscape in the South of France, which values he very likely could not have expressed so convincingly or at all were he to have used the South Jersey flatlands as his subject. An artist, of course, goes to, is drawn and affected by, selects or accepts as a subject, a particular situation because of its inherent potentialities in reference to his interest and his entire personality. In "Gourdon," what we recognize that the facts of the subject were are not as we know they would or could possibly have been, even at Gourdon—people who happen to know the spot in the French Maritime Alps would vouch for that, although they might also recognize the very spot, the very house that appear in Soutine's painting.

The subject facts in Soutine, then, were, yes, departed from, distorted. But, we might ask, to what extent? Is the distortion greater or less than that which occurs in, for example, Raoul Dufy's "Deauville Harbor" (Plate 3)? The question is not an easy one to answer, for it is no simple matter to measure degree of departure from subjects facts. If we were to reply, as, perhaps, most people would, that Soutine's departures are more extreme than are Dufy's, we would be hard put to objectify our stand, and we could

possibly be wrong.* There are, in truth, gross departures in Dufy—the wirelike outline; the transparent, ghostlike figures; one color that leaks out, over, beyond its outlined shape and another that stops short of its boundary line or that sheds its outline, walks out of it, like a bit of plasma (an example on our part of a transferring of value); and the ground that appears to be as liquid as the area that says water. These distortions, reflecting a personal standpoint, are used by Dufy as a means to transfer into the view of the harbor some of the terseness of shorthand notations, some of the crispness of the calligraphic point-of-the-brush drawing of early Chinese paintings (*e.g.*, Plate 9), something of the color aliveness of the Impressionists, their simplifications, the vividness of Matisse and the characteristics of such things as confetti, firecrackers, butterflies—all for the sake of which Dufy distorts in this, his, way. In the face of this, to claim that Dufy comes any closer to presenting the known features of his subject of figures, water, etc., than Soutine does of tree, house, landscape seems at best arbitrary.

We have had occasion to discuss distortion before,† and we shall have more occasions as we go on. Here we mean to stress that, in creative work of any sort, departure from subject facts in any manner or degree is part and parcel of its nature and is therefore legitimate. In other words, so

* A university professor sitting in on one of the classes at The Barnes Foundation took exception to our calling Dufy's departures from subject facts "distortions." He insisted that there were no distortions in Dufy, merely "abbreviations." We would counter by pointing out that abbreviations, if that be what Dufy's changes in the appearance of the subject are, still are departures from the subject facts and, therefore, are distortions.

These departures, besides, are a kind, not a degree, of distortion. As a matter of fact, abbreviations may represent more extreme departures from subject facts than other types of distortion: Marquet's drawing shown on Plate 10, with its greatly abbreviated representation, is perhaps further removed from the subject facts to which it refers than is either Dufy's painting or Soutine's, despite the fact that its subject might be more readily identifiable than those of the latter. To say, then, that abbreviation is not distortion is like saying that a lamb chop is not meat because it is not beef or that red is not a color because it is not like blue, which is a color.

† See Violette de Mazia, "Creative Distortion," Parts I, II, III and IV in the Autumn, 1972, through Spring, 1974, issues of *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*.

long as we deal with art, we shall have to deal with distortion, and “the sky’s the limit” as to how far distortion may reach, provided distortion is used as a means to aesthetic ends and is not distortion for the sake of distortion—done to show off how “modern,” how individual and exclusive one is or to serve as a trick, an easy way to attract attention, a jumping on the bandwagon, as countless imitators of Raoul Dufy have used it, such as, for example, Cobelle (*e.g.*, Plate 4), Jean Dufy (Raoul’s brother) (*e.g.*, Plate 5) and legions of others.*

Distortions are an integral part of expression because expression comes from a selective process of perception, not an indiscriminate accepting of sense registration. Some painters, sculptors, writers merely accept and report all the stimuli as registered by their senses—they do not express anything, but simply regurgitate what they have taken in—and they are not artists. An artist never tells all, *i.e.*, never gives only what was there for everyone to see. And, in not telling all, he distorts: changing even one factor alters the relationships that originally existed among the components and alters, therefore, the components themselves. And who wants to tell all and be a bore because he gives too much of “it” and nothing of “its” personal significance? Also, who wants to be told all and be bored because he learns so much less of human significance than he does when selection and reorganization of the subject facts from the viewpoint of another human being’s interest has taken place?

In telling things of a personal nature, distortion, of course, comes in, as do, perforce, transferred values; and, each time, what is told will be new, unlike what has been told before or will be told next time, and can be, for that reason, of distinctive interest to us. Among three paintings in which a reclining nude is the principal subject fact, done by Renoir (Plate 14), Cézanne (Plate 13) and Matisse (Plate

* Raoul Dufy, it is both true and lamentable, showed the way in his late work (*e.g.*, Plate 6) for the “copycats” by what amounts to a kind of parodying of his own manner of doing and exploiting the success of his own earlier ideas; or, to put it succinctly, ideas in his late work are skimmed over and skinned, and the technique is but an automatic, a cannot-help-itself, flippant gesture.

16), respectively, there is a wealth of different things said through the personal distortions each artist uses in his handling of the subject and a corresponding wealth of transferred values to be found in each of the works: Renoir, with transferred values from the Venetians, Rubens, the Impressionists, and such sources as cascades, dripping water and more, distorts for the sake of warmth, richness, full-bodiedness, fluidity, crisp gentleness; Cézanne, with transferred values from sculpture, the Venetians, Daumier, Manet, the Impressionists, such resources as fish scales, bricks and more, distorts for an all-there, blocky solidity; and Matisse, with transferred values from Cézanne, Manet, the Orientals, and such things as orchids and brass bands, distorts for the all-encompassing exotic color drama which is his own. And each painting, for what the artist in each case does, becomes individually significant to us.*

Returning to Soutine's "Gourdon": we can now see that the fact that the subject was house, tree, rocky mountain, etc., is important to us as we look at the canvas, but not by any means is it more important than is what house, tree, rocky mountain have become, are, do, say on the canvas as color units with the character and function they acquired from the landscape \rightleftharpoons Soutine transaction. As what they have become by way of what Soutine has done, house, tree and mountain can be and are deeply stirring—to those, that is, who have learned the artist's language and do not look for what is not intended—and they can be and are deeply stirring in a way which, left alone, *i.e.*, not experienced and expressed by the artist Soutine but merely re-produced literally, as in an ordinary color photograph of the spot or a merely factual representation by an academic illustrator, they could not be.

Irrespective of our liking or disliking the Soutine, we cannot escape seeing what Benton saw, although he did, and we shall not, stop seeing there. That is to say, one of

* For a fuller comparison of these three canvasses, see Violette de Mazia, "Three Aspects of Art," in the Autumn, 1975, issue of *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, pp. 55–57.

the initial impacts of the painting is that of a mass of sweeping smears, smudges, splashes and strokes violently struck onto the canvas. And these sweeping units of color now strike us by the variety of their shapes, sizes, directions of movement and, further, pull, push and tear through and all over the picture area every which way, but with a stress on two main courses—the diagonal towards the upper right and the diagonal towards the upper left, with the first more in evidence than the second and giving more to the identity of the painting: it is a Soutine landscape with *that* upward-moving tree or unit.

We might, for a moment, make a brief digression from our main theme to compare this upward-moving tree-unit in the Soutine with the tree-unit in Gritchenko's "Olympia" (Plate 29) and van Gogh's "The Sower" (Plate 28). In all three—the Soutine, the Gritchenko, the van Gogh—a dramatic pattern is produced, and that pattern is definitely created by the prominent, upward-moving tree having been set against the rest of the landscape. Otherwise, the pictures, in terms of aesthetic meaning, have little in common.*

True, the tree in all three pictures goes up and across the area of the painting, but beyond that—in *how* it moves across and *what* it does—the likeness ceases. In the van Gogh the tree "moves" up and across the picture area only in the sense that it extends from here to there, and even the brush strokes making it up, which, like Soutine's, parallel the general direction of the tree-unit, are relatively static. The tree functions, then, mainly as a broad, dark, diagonal band in the foreground that cuts dramatically across the lighted landscape and as dramatically sets off, in *repoussoir* fashion, the recession, at the same time that it forms, with the dark, silhouetted figure at the left, a

* Again, we might ask whether the Soutine tree be more distorted than the tree in the van Gogh or the Gritchenko. We could not but answer that both Gritchenko's tree and van Gogh's are as little like a tree as is Soutine's and that the difference among them lies not in the degree, but in the *kind*, of distortion, the direction of the departure from the subject facts that each artist takes in his presentation, what the distortion consists of, what the distorted unit is used with, what it achieves.

pyramidal archway through which one glimpses the landscape beyond. Gritchenko's tree is like van Gogh's in its feeling of "setness" as opposed to a sense of actual movement. In contrast to van Gogh's, however, Gritchenko's tree builds up like a stack of tiles, as do also the hills—a transferred value from Cézanne's planes and Cubism—while the color is grayed, and the drama throughout and between the tree and the rest of the landscape is comparatively quiet.

Soutine's tree, too, has transferred values from Cézanne, but this time it is of Cézanne's positiveness and power, as of the trees in Cézanne's "Nudes in Landscape" (Plate 19)—values very different from those from the same artist transferred into his tree by Gritchenko, who did not include Cézanne's power at all, but only what he needed, which was the slicing up of volumes into planes. Also, while Gritchenko's and van Gogh's tree traverses the canvas from bottom to top in the sense only that it inhabits that particular area of each of the pictures, the tree in "Gourdon" conveys a sense of actual movement: it *goes*, travels like a live thing, from bottom to top, rising, moving on, then up, then on, then up, pulling and pushing at each step, forcing its way through the space it occupies. And, too, it moves in specific ways: it rises, surges and writhes and propels itself like a snake. But what a snake! A snake with an angular, knotty spine made of very un-snakelike stuff that combines fiery iron girders and green lava and which moves with the fury and the propelling power of a roaring lion, rather than with, or, perhaps, together with, the insinuating sinuousness of a snake. Moreover, as the tree rises, it moves in and out, to the right, to the left and unremittingly upward, gathering momentum at each step; and part way along, it flings out an arm to the right, and, again, at the top, it flings out an arm that arches around its "head," with the taut, springy let-go of a lasso, in a frenzied swirl that ends in flamelike tongues towards a snakelike, "elbowed," smaller limb at the left.

We do not, of course, mean to say that the units in Soutine's painting are *like* any of those things—snake, girder, lasso, etc.—that they call to mind, but that they

have *qualities*, by way of transferred values on both Soutine's and our part, that such things have in our experience of them. Nor, when we speak of fire or flame, do we refer to its temperature or to its consuming action or even to its color, but to the sense of color and light in movement, the reaching out like a tongue.*

This flaming fieriness of which "Gourdon" partakes is embodied in units and shapes that surge up as if electrically generated or energized, with peculiarly jerky impulses that lend intensity to the drama of the overall picture activity. Likewise is there a power, a drama of a big upward pulsation, that comes about by the nature of what thus moves—those large, ruggedly ridged sweeps of color strokes—and, also, by the nature of the rest of the picture it is with on the canvas, with which there is a reciprocal relationship: the tree moves against the other principal compositional unit, the rocky mountain (a large pyramidal mass rising from the lower right to the upper left), which acts as a foil to the linear thrust of the tree. The upward push of the tree is materially reinforced in its directness, positiveness and power by the "induced" movement which the activity of the mountain imparts to it. That is, the mountain functions as a counter-thrust that creates an equilibrium, as it also reinforces the upward push of the tree, which latter would not thrust so assertively upward

* Obviously, the transferred value of flame may take many different guises and may be found in paintings quite unlike Soutine's, with an almost limitless range of different resulting effects. In Dufy's "Deauville Harbor" (Plate 3), for instance, it is, as we noted above, the short, snappy crackling of firecrackers of which we are reminded; in his "*La Sortie des Six Mètres*" (Plate 2), it is, instead, the long, undulating licking of a candle flame; in Renoir's "Fruit and Candy Dish" (Plate 27) and "Girl with Hat" (Plate 47), it is the will-o'-the-wisp of small and delicately colored units of light; in Renoir's "Sailor Boy" (Plate 51), in the seaweed-covered land, it is the flicker of a match. In Soutine's "Trees at Gourdon" (Plate 67), the "fire" is of the rearing flames of a roaring volcano. And, if someone stops us to ask, "Isn't it wrong to make a landscape, trees, etc., have the meaning of rearing flames of a roaring volcano?", our answer is that it is no more wrong than calling our friend "Honey" or "Sugarplum".

In none of the above paintings is either flame or fire represented. It is, rather, that varied qualities of flame or fire have been embodied in, transferred into, units that say, as the case may be, harbor scene, boat sail, still life, head of girl, seaweed, tree trunks.

nor do so with such intense drama were it not moving against the counter-thrust of the mountain, and vice versa. In other words, an increase in their respective movements is induced by the drama of the contrast in their directions. Further, the rocky mountain is a massive mass, and it moves unmistakably from lower right to upper left, doing so with a positiveness and a forcefulness that come about as much because of what the mass of the mountain is as because of the reciprocal action of the tree and the added induced movement it provides.*

The mountain in "Gourdon" is compact in effect, with color units moving and writhing within it that yield illustrative meanings such as rocky earth, house and path. Nevertheless, although more a massive than a linear unit, it partakes of much of what the tree is. This mountain possesses transferred values of the sort we have already met in the tree, as tongues of fire, snakes, some peculiar incandescent stuff. In its upper reaches, the area above and to the left of the house, we find a bizarre lyrelike unit made of fiery snakes ready to sting, a deep mysterious cavern all aglow, the forge of Vulcan, an earthquake sitting for its portrait, "the dev'l turnin' 'round"—or, rather, the suggestion of such things through the nature of the drama, the movement, the force, etc., that Soutine's use of his means gives rise to. In short, this mountain-unit is intensely dramatic and embodies, in keeping with the rest of the painting, a turmoil of conflicting forces.

* To objectify our observations on the induced movement effected by the thrust and counter-thrust in "Gourdon", we shall imagine ourselves on a train in the process of making its run from Philadelphia to New York. At some point in our trip, a train traveling from New York to Philadelphia passes us on an adjacent track, giving us a momentary sense of accelerating our forward motion, although in reality we do not: the sense of increased speed is the result solely of the relationship between the directional movements of the two trains.

Furthermore, the identity of the second speeding object in our example also plays a rôle in the effect we noticed: were it a grain of dust or a mosquito, rather than something of a size and power comparable to the train, that was going to Philadelphia, the sense of acceleration in us would not have been produced. This illustrates again the importance of *what* as well as of *how* for perceiving the particular meaning of a relationship. And the rocky mountain in the Soutine is far from having the insignificance of size and power of a mosquito or a grain of dust, so that its action cannot but be taken into account.

As within the mountain, everywhere within the area of Soutine's picture, assertive dramatic contrasts come in to enliven the expressiveness: light and dark slash into each other; color ranges all the way from earthy tones to glowing, mineral hues; linear boundaries cut, twist, slide off and sweep; and the brush strokes climb up, push the tree up as they push and pull each other over each other in every direction and all over the surface, thus carrying the dramatic action into depth, as the strokes swish, swirl and sweep over the entire landscape and fly up into and across the sky.

The brush strokes, with their pattern and variegated shapes, sizes and directions much in evidence, may possibly appear to an untrained eye or unperceptive mind to be but a haphazard *méli-mélo* (a desultory mixture of units thrown together without rhyme or reason). In fact, they have been precisely, yet spontaneously—*i.e.*, as the very painting process took place—determined and organized, albeit subconsciously or intuitively, by the artist's sensed need for their particular shapes, sizes, directions and actions in the carrying out of his intent.

The brush strokes that construct "Gourdon," indeed, function in their own right very directly as a part of the picture expressiveness. Rather than merely decorating the surface of the canvas, they pile up the paint in intermingling, rugged layers of thick pigment that are squashed on, smashed and crushed, instead of simply blended, together. The paint seems even to have been hurled on, the colors to have been actually pounded in, all with an intense, let-go feeling of excitement, an unrelenting, impetuous spontaneity—the execution so vigorous that a fly (see lower right) happened to be caught in the pigment—this in sharp contrast, for instance, to the slow, deliberate manner of Cézanne. Soutine, as it were, "pitches" paint, and the result is a surface of unctuous pigment pressed on and in, swept along, made irregularly thick and ruggedly dented and ridged by the energetic handling of the brush, with coarse bristle marks encrusted deeply in the juicy, oily texture of the paint and color (the artist obviously used

broad, square brushes of hog bristle rather than pointed sable ones).

The characteristic identity of Soutine's brush strokes arises from the fact that they objectify a segment of an energetic hand-and-brush sweep. This motion involves not a directly downward, right-angled-to-the-canvas gesture of arm and brush, but a slanting approach that imparts a sidling sweep which was initiated before contact with the canvas was made and which continues beyond the main body of the applied stroke of pigment*—an action and effect hardly present in, for instance, Cézanne's typical put-down-to-stay brush stroke of even width throughout its length or in the monotonously shaped, repeated and predictable ribbon-strokes of van Gogh or in the short, flickering, brisk touches of Dufy. Thus, because of Soutine's technique, there is a tendency for the brush strokes to taper off, either at one or at both of their ends, so that they can, and frequently do, move into and insert themselves, as they are dragged along, pushed on and pulled, between the strokes ahead of them, shoving these along as they, in turn, are being shoved along by the strokes that preceded them—all caught up and swept, so to speak, as by an unrelenting current which, of course, the brush strokes themselves create and energize. And, for all the apparent conflict of these variedly directed "currents" of brush strokes, each one remains "on course" for what each stroke, or group of strokes, is expected to and does achieve.

Movement, then, though extremely varied throughout, is

* The golfer's swing of body, arm and club prior to contact with the ball and his subsequent follow-through come to mind, as does also the trail of an aeroplane, with its gradual but rapidly traversed oblique arc, on take-off and landing, as against the directly vertical ascent and descent of a helicopter.

The sliding into and lift-off of the brush stroke is to be found in other artists, too, but rarely has it the intense energy and forcefulness that are Soutine's own. This kind of motion describes, for example, Renoir's brush work, but in his handling of the technique the sliding into and the lift-off of the brush from the surface of the canvas, as well as the pulling along with which he applies his translucent paint, are part of a caressing gesture of brush grazing the surface, which gesture is all delicacy and graceful fluidity.

the central fact, the focal idea in every area of "Gourdon" and the keynote of the entire organization. Its identity, its meaning, is most readily, indeed cannot but be, expressed in terms of transferred values. We can, for instance, "correctly" say that the brush strokes in the sky "fly" across each other's path; that elsewhere they "climb" up the base of the tree, and, from there on, overlapping and "riding roughshod" over each other, they forcefully "propel" its trunk upward as they ruthlessly "race" up to the top with a "let's-see-who-can-get-there-first" kind of eagerness and energy: one can hardly imagine or believe, as it more likely was so done, that the paint was applied in downward rather than upward strokes of the brush.

In short, movement conveyed by Soutine's brush work involves more than the elongated extension of its marks on the canvas, and the difference pointed out above, in this respect, with the brush work of van Gogh coincides with, as it is in great measure responsible for, the distinction indicated earlier in this essay (pp. 16–17) between the activity expressed by the tree in Soutine's "Gourdon" and by the tree in van Gogh's "The Sower" (Plate 28): in the Soutine, to recall, the tree *goes*, is in motion, as are, we have now observed, the individual brush strokes that build it (and the rest of the painting) up; in the van Gogh, the tree *extends* from one end of the canvas to the other, simply reaches from here to there, with no intrinsic sense of its animation, as is the case also of the units of its brush work.

It frequently happens, too, in "Gourdon" that, not unlike what results from Cézanne's palette-knife application of the paint in his early work (*e.g.*, Plate 35), Soutine's paint-loaded brush "hits," "slaps" or "attacks," we might say, the canvas directly, squarely and in full force, as in an act of dispassionate aggression, thus squashing down the thick, juicy pigment and raising a ridge at the tip ends and at the sides of the brush stroke, which ridges impart to the area so painted the rugged aspect of an irregularly plowed field and are responsible for the dramatic aliveness of the composite picture surface.

In every area, in "Gourdon," the big and the small units move with compelling force and drama. In Dufy's

“Deauville Harbor” (Plate 3), examined earlier, there is movement also, but it is crisp and rather delicate and is of things light in weight. In the Soutine, the drama and the movement embody such characteristics as those we might experience in the forces of nature, the elements on the loose—a storm at sea; a whirlpool; a typhoon; the roar of thunder; the flashing of lightning, with nature suddenly revealed in the burst of light. “Gourdon” conveys also feelings we may associate with tempestuous human emotions reeling mad as they battle each other, yet kept nevertheless in balance, under control. And these various dramatic experiences, with all their depth and gripping poignancy, are held by and expressed in terms of qualities intrinsic to the artist-painter’s medium—color and its derivatives, light, line and space—as opposed to what happens in, say, Curry’s “Tornado over Kansas” (Plate 32), in which the message is communicated by way of the recognizable subject, *i.e.*, the illustrative aspect, alone.

In “Gourdon” there is a balance, a picture unity, that arises not from the subject or from adherence, on the part of the artist, to laws of gravity or to academic “rules” of how a picture “should” be organized. Instead, the coherence comes from the very units which create the particular kind of drama and activity Soutine here achieves, and it permeates, in the manner of transferred values, every aspect of the painting as an expression of Soutine’s experience.

On another occasion when we discussed the subject of Transferred Values,* we pointed out that the congeniality, coherence, unity, in a given situation, be that situation considered visually, aurally, and so on, or be it a picture contained by the boundaries of the area on which it is painted or a “picture” constructed of disparate paintings and other objects as they are made to compose among themselves, is essentially a matter of transferred values—characteristics, meanings belonging to one or more of the components being transferred into and thus qualifying the makeup of the other components and, by so doing, estab-

* *Ibid.*, pp. 20–24.

lishing a sense of compatibility, a kinship, among them and a thread of continuity, a unity, as does (to recall one of our previous examples) the somberness and heaviness distinctive of Courbet's color in his "The White Stocking" with regard to the overall tonality of the eighteenth-century chest set below it, and the blackish, heavy shadows in Renoir's "Flowerpiece" hung above it (see Plate 50).*

Soutine adheres in "Gourdon" to the principle exemplified in the process of structural or organic unification in the "picture" created by the chest-Courbet-etc., arrangement. From the point of view of the illustrative aspect, for

* To illustrate from a different angle and bearing in mind our earlier discussion of the rôle of transferred values in the establishing of unity (*ibid.*, pp. 20–24) and of what we might call the "consanguinity" of transferred values with unity—the first being the means, the latter the attained result—let us consider the makeup of what one generally describes as a sportswear outfit. From head to toe a certain casual and practically fashioned style and a certain set of qualities that answer to the requirements for a particular use prevail—ruggedness of texture, for instance, and simplicity yet positiveness, even perhaps boldness, of pattern and color. Were we to substitute patent-leather, light-in-weight opera pumps or dainty pink satin ballet slippers or skin diver's rubber flippers for the sturdy, heavy-soled shoes that are a part of this outfit, we would be substituting incongruity for unity—the incongruity arising from the fact that characteristics that belong to and are responsible for the distinctive identity of a sportswear outfit are not in evidence in the pumps, the slippers and the flippers, and vice versa, *i.e.*, from the fact that no transfer of qualities *essential* to sportswear outfit from one item to the other takes place. And the pumps, the slippers and the flippers would be, in that context, beyond the pale.

It might be argued that "protective covering," which term applies as accurately to pumps, to slippers and to flippers as it does to sport shoes and the rest of the items of a sportswear outfit, makes the pumps, the slippers and the flippers, by way of transferred values in our perception of them in that respect, be in agreement, and therefore unified, with the rest of the sportswear outfit. True enough—that observation is factually correct. But the unity thus promoted is, *from the standpoint of* sportswear outfit, one of subsidiary rather than primary factors and, consequently, of a subsidiary, not a primary, nature. Indeed, the situation would be not unlike that of the pyramidal formation, referred to in the text, of the Pennsylvania chest, the Courbet and Renoir paintings and the iron latch: if a picture typical, for example, of Miró or Matisse, conforming in shape and size to the Courbet or either of the two Renoirs, were to replace any one of these works, there would not be, *from the standpoint of* aesthetic characteristics, sufficient primary matter in common presented to us to permit of a transference from one component of the pyramidal grouping to the other to make them all participate in an integrated, interweaving strand.

The skin diver's flippers, in like manner, congenial as they are to the accoutrements of a particular sport, are found to be lacking in what is specifically required for them to be and to function as integral elements constructively involved and united in what, in general, we mean by "sportswear outfit."

instance, everything partakes of a sense of violent distortion—the things depicted are elongated, forced “out of shape”—for the sake of the dramatic expressiveness of the whole presentation. Likewise of the decorative: the pattern and the color exist as an uninterrupted construction of tortuous shapes and molten tones, hurled and dragged on, crushed in and pulled along, as the strokes themselves were seen to have been, which construction is at one with what creates the drama of the scene.

Unity prevails, too, by the organization of the units on the canvas: the long and narrow upright patch of blue at the lower right border, for example, not only says “sky” or “deep space,” but helps to make the rocky mountain reel; and it also balances, at the lower right, the strip of sky and space at the upper left edge, thereby reinforcing the diagonal of the mountain which is thus sandwiched between these strips of blue space. Were that lower strip of sky and space eliminated, the mountain would become stabilized, and the picture drama compromised.

Another factor in the Soutine which contributes to the overall oneness, and, too, serves to produce tension, is the series of triangular wedges, with each of the apexes pulling away from the others, that moves upward from the base of the tree to the base of the house and that is taken up by the house itself, by the top part of the mountain and by the sky, with the mountain and house sandwiched in by a large triangular unit at the upper right and lower left, respectively—all of which movement is threaded by the diagonal of the tree from the lower left corner of the canvas to the upper right edge (see Plate 63).*

Still a further means by which unity is achieved in “Gourdon” is the making of an area of color, etc., serve as

* It is a common academic criticism of such compositional arrangements (as of the Soutine tree) that they are “wrong”: a linear unit, it is asserted, should not extend unbroken over so large an area. Yet, it can be said that all is fair in art, provided that the end be justified on the basis of aesthetic significance. Here in the Soutine, the sweep, the power, the striking drama could not be if, as the “rule” stipulates, the line of the tree were broken up. Besides, this type of compositional unit can be found in the traditions—it was used, for example, by Giorgione (*e.g.*, Plate 18) and Tintoretto (*e.g.*, Plate 62)—where the academically-minded fail or refuse to notice the violation of their dictum.

part of more than one picture unit, as happens with the upper branches of the tree and the sky and with the dark area-line* along the left edge of the tree, just below the center of the composition, which area-line also belongs to the house. This sharing of actual matter has its counterpart throughout the canvas in a corresponding sharing of expressive qualities, so that the units belong to each other as well by way of what is transferred of essential character from one into the other—the quirking quiver of sweeps, for instance; the kind of color richness; the rugged unductuosity of the pigment; the regularly irregular pattern and surface character of the brush work; the type of distortion and the type of tension and movement the distortion makes for. The units belong to each other, too, by way of what each unit has of values transferred into it from similar categories of effects—the power, the drama, the weirdness that pervade the entire painting.

The sense of weirdness in “Gourdon,” due, as it is, entirely to the nature of the transferred values with which the painting abounds, perhaps requires objectification. We can, for example, point to the “green demon” (illustratively, rock and vegetation) at the lower right, who is reeling wildly at the base of the mountain from which he has fallen as he implores, with arms outstretched, whatever creature he sees to rescue him. His gesture has a rigid tension that carries over into, is picked up and echoed by, the stiffly extended, upside down “chicken legs” (illustratively, vegetation) at his left, while the unit—perhaps a tree stump growing from the side of the mountain—silhouetted against the sky at the middle right, almost directly above the “demon,” says, has, the rigidity, the alert fixity, of a rabbit or a squirrel “at attention” or the dynamic rhythm of African sculpture of a certain type (*e.g.*, Plate 56). Again, the main tree-unit, phantasmagorical in its

* By “area-line” we mean a linear element which, because of its width, partakes somewhat also of the nature of an area, as does, for example, the dark band in “Gourdon” that runs alongside of the left edge of the house. In fact, the tree trunk itself and Soutine’s broad, elongated brush strokes assume, likewise, the character of area-lines.

lineaments, emerges, rather than grows, from its roots and materializes as does a wraith hovering over a witch's cauldron, all the while swirling upward with the let-go of some exalted dancer twisting his body and flinging his head backward in complete abandon (see Plate 69*). From its lower trunk, the tree throws out an "arm" to the right that "spits" at the "demon" like a cat, but it is "fire" that it "spits," with a "snake's tongue" giving the impetus. And the large branch at the tree top has the swing of a soaring eagle with the body and tail of a snake, while in the smoldering blue sky there is the back-and-forth activity of a flock of wild, weird "birds" that cut across and through each other's trail.†

* Cf., also, Plate 68.

† Specific though we (and Soutine) have been in itemizing this array of creatures, the things we have named—green demon, wraith, exalted dancer, cat, eagle, etc.—are there by virtue not of factual detail but of the meanings generated by the kind of drama that the color, the shape and texture of the brush strokes, the pattern of light and dark and of unit-areas, and so on create; and our "discovery" of them enhances rather than detracts from our seeing of what Soutine expresses in this painting.

This enhancing effect may be more easily grasped if we differentiate the function of these "creatures" in the Soutine from that of the dual images in the metamorphic pictures of the Surrealists (see also Violette de Mazia, "Transferred Values," Autumn, 1978, pp. 27–28). In the case of the Soutine and not of the metamorphic paintings, two images (*e.g.*, tree and dancer) merge into a single entity (*e.g.*, a dancing tree), with the characteristics of one image (*e.g.*, dancing-ness) qualifying the identity of the other (*e.g.*, tree trunk). This illustrates the basic principle of transferred values. In the case of the Surrealists, on the other hand, when one image is perceived, characteristics of the other are not: although physically the images may be one, *i.e.*, may coincide in the area they occupy on the canvas, perceptually they remain separate.

Intermediate between these two, in what we have termed the "gray zone" (*ibid.*, pp. 20, 20–21 ftn), is the circumstance in which there is competition for the viewer's attention by the identity of the separate images, though there be also a degree of carry-over of meanings.

A point may be made here with regard to transferred values and the pigment and brush work, or technique, in general, which, perforce, contribute their own features or characteristics to the identity they establish—for instance, in the sky of "Gourdon"—and, in turn, are qualified by the meanings they acquire that are transferred into them by the meanings that belong to the established identity—*e.g.*, angry-sky-ness. And, when technique remains but a superficial, unintegrated pattern, then, too, corresponding in a fashion to the separateness of the images in metamorphic paintings, there is a dichotomy in the perception of the result: we are made aware as much of the technique as such as we are of what that technique is supposed but fails to accomplish (*e.g.*, Plate 49).

An effect of weirdness is also expressed by the house-unit, which is locked into the receding, compact sequence of the other main masses—specifically, by its upper part, where its windows become as haggard, staring eyes in the face of a ghost or a skull, perhaps calling to mind, for those who know the poem, “*Le Passeur d’Eau*” (“The Ferryman”), by Émile Verhaeren,* the image therein of clock faces and eyelike windows in the houses along the shore that stare at or mock the seaman as he wages his losing battle against the stormy waters; or, to others, those “eyes” possibly suggest by way of transferred values the unearthly eeriness of Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher” or of Robert

* *LE PASSEUR D’EAU*

... *Les fenêtres, avec leurs yeux,
Et le cadran des tours, sur le rivage,
Le regardaient peiner et s’acharner,*

• • • • •

*Les fenêtres, sur le rivage,
Comme des yeux grands et fiévreux
Et les cadrans des tours, ces veuves
Droites, de mille en mille, au bord des
fleuves,
Fixaient, obstinément,
Cet homme fou, en son entêtement
A prolonger son fol voyage.*

• • • • •

*Les fenêtres et les cadrans,
Avec des yeux béats et grands,
Constatèrent sa ruine d’ardeur, ...*

THE FERRYMAN

... The casements with their eyes,
The dial-faces of the towers that rise
Upon the shore
Watched, as he strove and laboured
more and more.

• • • • •

The casements by the pier,
Like eyes immense and feverish open
wide,
The dials of the towers—those widows
drear
Upstanding straight from mile to mile
beside
The banks of rivers—obstinately
gazed
Upon this madman, in his headstrong
craze.

• • • • •

The casements and the dials, one by
one,
Their huge eyes gazing in a foolish
stare,
Witnessed the ruin of his ardour
there; ...

Wiene's film "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" or of some similarly weird situation elsewhere experienced.*

Weirdness characterizes also the "lyre" unit (illustratively, vegetation and rock) in "Gourdon" in the upper area of the mountain to the left of the house. And the silhouetted mass of the mountain itself, profiled to the left, suggests transferred values of still other grotesque things—a monster's head; a gargoyle; a rhinoceros of amorphous massiveness with a long goatee and a palm leaf for a horn; a Kacina doll, with its grotesque distortions and its top-heavy configuration—and of girders twisted by fire.†

All of these transferred values, which, by themselves, are absurdly incongruous with the subject facts of "Gourdon," combine to produce an overall dramatic, vigorous expression of unreal reality. Yet, they are embedded, as we noted earlier, in units that nonetheless say "house," "tree," "mountain," "sky" and, furthermore, in units that retain a convincing sense of actuality as color units in three-dimensional space. If we squint at the base of the tree, for instance, we can see that it definitely takes its place in space and sets the rest of the units back, *repoussoir* fashion. This tree is patently "right" in what it is and does and in where it is for *this* unit in *this* picture, a unit which is not what the tree-unit was as a part of the subject, but what that subject-unit became in terms of color and of this particular artist's handling of it on this particular occasion. And color as color, with all its transferred qualities, all its departures

* The specific expressive quality of the "eyes" in the Soutine may be made even more apparent if we compare them to the effect of the "eyes" in Cézanne's "Bibémus Quarry" (Plate 60)—*i.e.*, the units of the windows in the building at the right—where the drama is relatively mild, but the planes and the space are positive, or to the effect of the "eyes" in Utrillo's "The Lamp Post" (Plate 61)—*i.e.*, the two dark units on the wall—where space and drama are subsidiary to the pattern made by the subject facts, or to the effect of the "eyes" in Gritchenko's "Landscape with Goat" (Plate 41)—*i.e.*, the dark units in the building atop the arch—which function compositionally as a focus whereby the directional slant towards the upper right is stressed.

† Again, the expressive identity of these "girders" in the Soutine may be more clearly perceived if we set them against the massive, weighty, solid, stable "girders" in Cézanne's work (*e.g.*, Plate 19), which, contrary to those in the Soutine, exercise a decidedly sedate stabilizing effect on the compositional structure of the painting.

from subject facts, retains the essentials of the things represented—tree, path, sky, rock, house. The white of the house, for instance, does give us the known weather-beaten walls. The enrichment comes in by way of Soutine's imaginative perception and expression, according to which the color is made deep, juicy, fat, with a weight in part due to the crunchy, unctuous, glistening texture and surface of its impasto and glowing color chords, with transferred values of such things as rocks, quartz, lava, chemicals, ceramics.

The transferred values merge with, as they enrich the expression of, the old, weather-beaten house on the side of a rock, which house acts as a dramatic focus for the composition and expresses the weirdness and intense drama that interested Soutine—as opposed to the expression, for example, of intimate warmth and mellowness that a weather-beaten house by Utrillo (*e.g.*, Plate 61) would have.*

* Sarah Winston, a member of the Seminar of The Barnes Foundation Art Department, conveys her experience of Soutine's expression with her own selection of transferred values in a poem she entitles "Soutine: 'Gourdon'":

Raw with globs of
rich impasto
flung on canvas
screaming power, color—
slabs of chorded color
 snaking, twisting
 circling, raging,
tortured undulation,
wanton anamorphosis,
gnarling movement.

Coiling up, around,
sweeping down in
 grotesque convolution,
weird distortion flailing out
like lizards crawling,
 writhing in a labyrinth
 of frenzy.

Wild in image, mad with drama,
yet swept with calm intent.

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Again, Antoinette Adam, a participant in the Foundation's course, asks, in her

There remain to be considered the values in "Gourdon" that have been transferred from the traditions and that give its "itness" to this so-Soutinesque expression. These values have, as we said before and as we now stress, been *transferred*—not, as they are in the case of the academic painters, for example, Derain, caught, so to speak, in a dragnet.*

Transferred from the Venetian tradition in general is the principle of color units "in movement" and the glow and richness of color. From Tintoretto come the power; the compositional swirl; a sense of force or monumentality that is, in Soutine, defined by movement rather than by weight; the large-scale diagonal sweep and counter-sweep (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Tintoretto's "Hercules and Antaeus" shown on Plate 62); and the idea of modeling by means of more or less parallel bands, by which direction and activity are emphasized—as in the tree trunk in "Gourdon" and in the sleeves in Tintoretto's "Two Prophets" (Plate 48). From El

poem "Metamorphosis of 'Gourdon'," of the Soutine painting if it be art and answers the question with another, yet equally legitimate, selection of transferred values:

Can this be art? This sinister daub
white waterfall cascading down a hill—
I would have passed Soutine—disdaining
the blobs gyrating on canvas
out of the phantasmagoria
of his private Tenebrae

As lightning illuminates a landscape
transforming sable silhouettes
so blind eyes see
what no words can convey
and seeing, realize they were blind:
we wrestle with inchoate flux
until the inner space of mind expands.

Now the halfway house looms white
impervious to the spectral horde—
werewolf, black snake and wraith,
while gold tinges
a phoenix rising.

* For a discussion of Derain's use of the traditions, the reader is referred to Violette de Mazia, "E Pluribus Unum—Cont'd: Part IV," Autumn, 1977, p. 13.

Greco (*e.g.*, Plate 38) are transferred the sense of elongation, the jerky, linear character of the twists, the vividness of the flashes of light, the eerie weirdness and the mysticism induced by the intensity of the expressed emotions, religious or not. From Delacroix (*e.g.*, Plate 1) Soutine transfers the pervasive active swirl of the brush strokes and the juiciness of the pigment. From Daumier comes a type of simplification which, with no loss of essential actuality, heightens the expressiveness by the distorted exaggeration of certain features of the subject that makes it tend towards the grotesque—what constitutes the principle of caricature. In Soutine this distortion is carried further than it is in Daumier, but its starting point is evident in such distortions as appear in the dramatically drawn face and snaky hair of the figure at the left in Daumier's "The Imaginary Invalid" (Plate 34). From Manet (*e.g.*, Plate 31) Soutine transfers the expressiveness of the individual strokes, and from Manet, too, though used for a different result, he transfers the glow and the dramatic punctuating action of the whites and the darks, to which he gives a Venetian sense of depth. The allover patterning and the unifying function of the technique come, in part, from the Impressionists, but in Soutine the individual strokes acquire a bigness, a drama, a forcefulness, a sweeping activity which are never encountered in the Impressionists' use of that brush work.

Soutine's patterning ribbonlike strokes, loaded with paint and activating each color area, stem obviously from van Gogh, whose work, ironically, Soutine disliked and refused to acknowledge as an influence on his painting. Interestingly, a side-by-side comparison of the two men's canvasses shows up van Gogh's strokes as monotonous, stilted and lacking in color depth. Indeed, next to Soutine, van Gogh, the "mad," the "wild," the "impassioned," the "restless," the "emotionally high-wrought" and "unstable" and "psychologically agitated"—how tame, how placid he seems, how superficial and even "pretty" and dull, while Soutine has a depth to his fervor, an intensity of drama made up of a powerfully energetic activity of extraordinarily rich color units in space (*cf.*, *e.g.*, "Gourdon" with van

Gogh's "Thatches in the Sunshine [Reminiscence of the North]," Plate 45, or even "The Sower," Plate 28, with its emphatically dramatic dark tree cutting across and dominating the sunlit landscape).

Soutine's incorporation in his painting of values from Cézanne has specific reference to the latter's dynamic relationships of planes. To this we add such factors in Cézanne's work transferred by Soutine as those simplifications and distortions that foster the grotesque and the bizarre—all of which give rise to a kind of commonality of expression shared by the two artists* which was tersely summarized by John Dewey when once, passing in front of Cézanne's "Bibémus Quarry" (Plate 60), he remarked, "If you were to explode a bomb in the middle of it, you would have a Soutine"—and, from the early Cézanne (*e.g.*, Plate 35), the full-bodiedness of the paint, the vigor and the deliberate plunking down of the pigment and the starkness of the forceful, interpenetrating light and dark. In Soutine the compositional activity is much more linear in character, as opposed to being composed, as it is in Cézanne, of areas and volumes.

Although not pronouncedly three-dimensional, Soutine's painting owes something also to values transferred from African sculpture (*e.g.*, Plate 57). In the Soutine, it is a matter of dismembering and reorganizing in terms not of individually static volumes, but of color areas "in movement."

After all has been said and done, after all that we have seen that Soutine's "Gourdon" is and says, it still may be for some viewers not their "cup o' tea." There are those among us who, possibly, prefer their tea weak, their steak well done, who do not care for the sorts of values Soutine's picture deals with. Some people may prefer the gentleness of Renoir or the stability of Cézanne—and they are entitled to their preferences, so long as they do not take

* *Cf.*, *e.g.*, the grotesque dinosaur-like character in the grouping of the planes in the foreground of Cézanne's "Bibémus Quarry" (Plate 60).

their tastes or idiosyncrasies as a basis for understanding and judging. It is through understanding, *i.e.*, seeing what a thing is, however, that we can broaden the field of things we enjoy and can reach that stage of enjoyment that involves understanding and which constitutes appreciation.

There is also this to be recalled with regard to our response to the artist's work—that the thing told *about*, the subject, is not the same as the telling, the expression, of the experience of it: the girl who is described as “all wool and a yard wide” may not, after all, be to our liking, yet we may enjoy, as we understand, the figurative, the imaginative use of the words, the transferred values resorted to. Again, we may not like what Shakespeare deals with when he says:

Round about the caldron go.
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmèd pot.

Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble.

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake.
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blindworm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a Hell broth boil and bubble.

Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble.

But we can enjoy his way of saying it. Similarly, Soutine's demon, snake, conflict, etc., are no more pleasing in themselves than is the murder which Othello or MacBeth commits, but Shakespeare's presentation of it in each case is a novel entity, with its own contents of human, traditional and aesthetic significance and transferred values galore.

That, of course, is what matters. Soutine's "Gourdon" is a work of art because of what the artist has expressed of broad human significance, enjoyable and of interest for what it is, in terms intrinsic to his medium of color, not because, as it has been said, the painting "reflects the chaos of our times." For, although such a "mirroring" may be of historical or psychological interest, it is not the interest of the art in painting: many a Soutine expresses even greater turmoil and yet remains chaotic, failing to come anywhere near this one as art. Chaos is not in itself of an aesthetic nature.

Having made reference to Soutine's unsuccessful paintings, we should relate the episode that accounts for at least some of them and which also explains why, at The Barnes Foundation, criticism of a student's work made to that student is frowned upon—an episode that embodies a lesson learned vicariously by us and at first hand by Dr. Barnes when he visited Soutine in Paris in the early 'twenties.

On his first visit to Soutine's studio, at which time he bought practically its entire contents of paintings—including "Gourdon"—Dr. Barnes was persuaded by the artist to give him a frank criticism of the work. Although reluctant to do so, Dr. Barnes obliged and, with a "since-he-asks-I'll-tell-him" sense of rationalization and no *arrière pensée* whatever regarding consequences, candidly pointed out that, whenever there was fault to find in the paintings, it seemed to be mainly a matter of confusion in the three-dimensional spacing of the units—a matter, naturally, of color relationships and/or of perspective. Dr.

Barnes might well have objectified his comment by directing the artist's attention to, say, the inappropriate—inappropriate in view of the character of the context—flattening out of the figure down onto the road in Soutine's "Landscape with Figure" (Plate 7) and, perhaps also, to that part of the background in his "Man in Blue" (Plate 64) which, on each side of the figure, from the shoulder down along the arm and leg, seems to have moved forward and to trespass over into the three-dimensional space by which the arms and legs would, otherwise, be comfortably surrounded by and more in keeping, from that standpoint, with the space relationships that, however distorted they be, prevail between the man's head and its immediate setting. Soutine, evidently, pondered, and*

Some months later, Dr. Barnes, again visiting Paris, received word from Soutine expressing his great eagerness to have Dr. Barnes see his recent work. Dr. Barnes' eagerness to accept this invitation was no less great. The experience, alas, turned out to be deeply perturbing, if not altogether heartbreaking: no longer was there fault to find with the space relationships—indeed, space, lateral and in depth, was everywhere clearly defined—but . . . the vitality, the free, let-go spontaneity and the fervor; the verve, the ardor and the intensity; the vigor, the power and the dash; the richness and the sensuousness; the profundity, the fire and the eloquence; the balance of disbalance in terms of these attributes; and whatever other broad human qualities and transferred values that said

* Parenthetically, we might report that Soutine, but a few days after Dr. Barnes' first visit and his sizable purchase, left Paris for a stay in that region of the South of France where he had previously painted. Most elegantly clad in brand new clothes, he alighted, *mirabile visu*, from a Paris-hired taxi in the center square of a town on the Côte d'Azur (the southeast part of the French Riviera), to the utter stupefaction of the local townsfolk, who no doubt rubbed their eyes in disbelief at what they were witnessing.

To get the full sensational significance of that event, we should be aware of the fact that, in the 'twenties (and possibly still now), the trip from Paris to Nice (the main city on the Côte d'Azur) by the special "*Train Bleu*" express took no less than eighteen hours; and we should also know that, when a French taxicab is hired to drive beyond the city limits, the fare includes the driver's return trip to the city of origin with his empty cab.

“Soutine” in the earlier canvasses had all but vanished! It was then, as a result of that extraordinary chain of events and the final debacle, that Dr. Barnes made it his firm policy to refrain from commenting to an artist or a student on the merits or the shortcomings of that artist’s or student’s work—and it is that policy which is steadfastly adhered to, *non sans cause*, by the faculty members of The Barnes Foundation Art Department: we learned vicariously, as we said, that bitter lesson which Dr. Barnes learned in Paris in the ’twenties.

It is, then, in the broad human values, which by their makeup involve and partake of transferred values, expressed by the artist that the significance to human experience of a painting lies.

If we consider another artist’s picture which refers to a subject similar to that of “Gourdon”—“Gorges du Loup” (Plate 65), by Maurice Freedman, for example, which deals with rocky mountains atop one of which the town of Gourdon is geographically located—we would get yet another set of broad human qualities and transferred values: specifically, in the Freedman, it is the expression of a rhythmic, crisp, staccato turbulence in a gentle key, with characteristics transferred, for example, from a frozen waterfall and milky or frosted glass, all of which we would not expect to find in a Soutine; nor, by the same token, would we expect the fervor, the poignancy, etc., of Soutine to be present in a painting by Freedman or, for that matter, any other artist. And the same sort of thing would occur if the other painting considered had been done by Soutine himself—his “Trees at Gourdon” (Plate 67), for instance, in which the configuration of the mountain projecting towards the upper left and the house behind the trees and the path in the foreground are all recognizable for having served Soutine also as his subject for “Gourdon.” Here, however, the expression, as Soutine-sque as is that of “Gourdon,” involves the warmth, the glow and the richness of the Venetians’ color as the latter was reinforced, in the sensuousness of its smoldering

incandescence, in paintings by Rembrandt (*e.g.*, Plate 66); and, singling out the row of tall trees, there are embodied such transferred values as those of rearing flames, a curtain of fire undulating in the wind and a parade of sun-drenched, and perhaps also somewhat gory, ghosts, lanky and ramose, spindle-shanked, high-waisted and sway-backed, gingerly tiptoeing, Indian file, arms aloft, across the foreground. For these transferred values, Soutine obviously tapped the same categories of background resources as for his "Gourdon," but selected on each occasion those characteristics that fulfilled the requirements of each picture's intent and that satisfied the artist's concern.

And suppose that we were given a photograph of the girl who is "all wool and a yard wide" or a photograph of the site of Soutine's "Gourdon"—*i.e.*, were given a reproduction, with no selection, no purposive emphasis and distortion, no figurative use of the facts, no transferred values to heighten, enhance and crystallize the identity of a particular experience. From these photographs we would not, could not, learn—would not, could not, that is, add to our knowledge of the world and of human nature responding to it: we could not know just how likable the girl can be, just how stirring a mountain-house-tree can be and had been to the artist Soutine and can be for us now, insofar as our mental furniture and general human equipment are adequate, appropriate and appropriately active or, to put it another way, insofar as our senses, our interest, our feelings, our imagination and background knowledge cooperate under the supervision of our intelligence.

As John Dewey says, "Intelligence is the purposive reorganization through action [not daydreaming, not wishful thinking] of the material of experience." It is this action that brings about what we call transferred values, which, by their very nature, are rooted in and enhance—rather than conflict with, camouflage or by-pass—objective matter. They provide a key to understanding what we see, and it is the understanding of a thing or situation that gives us not only the chance to broaden the field of what we may

enjoy, but also a basis in fact for our feelings: we no longer like something “because we like it,” but like it because of this and that which, we perceive, make it up—*i.e.*, like it intelligently. In other words, our understanding tightens the needed coordination between our mind and our emotions, which makes for intelligent living in any sphere of interest. And that, surely, is worthwhile striving for.

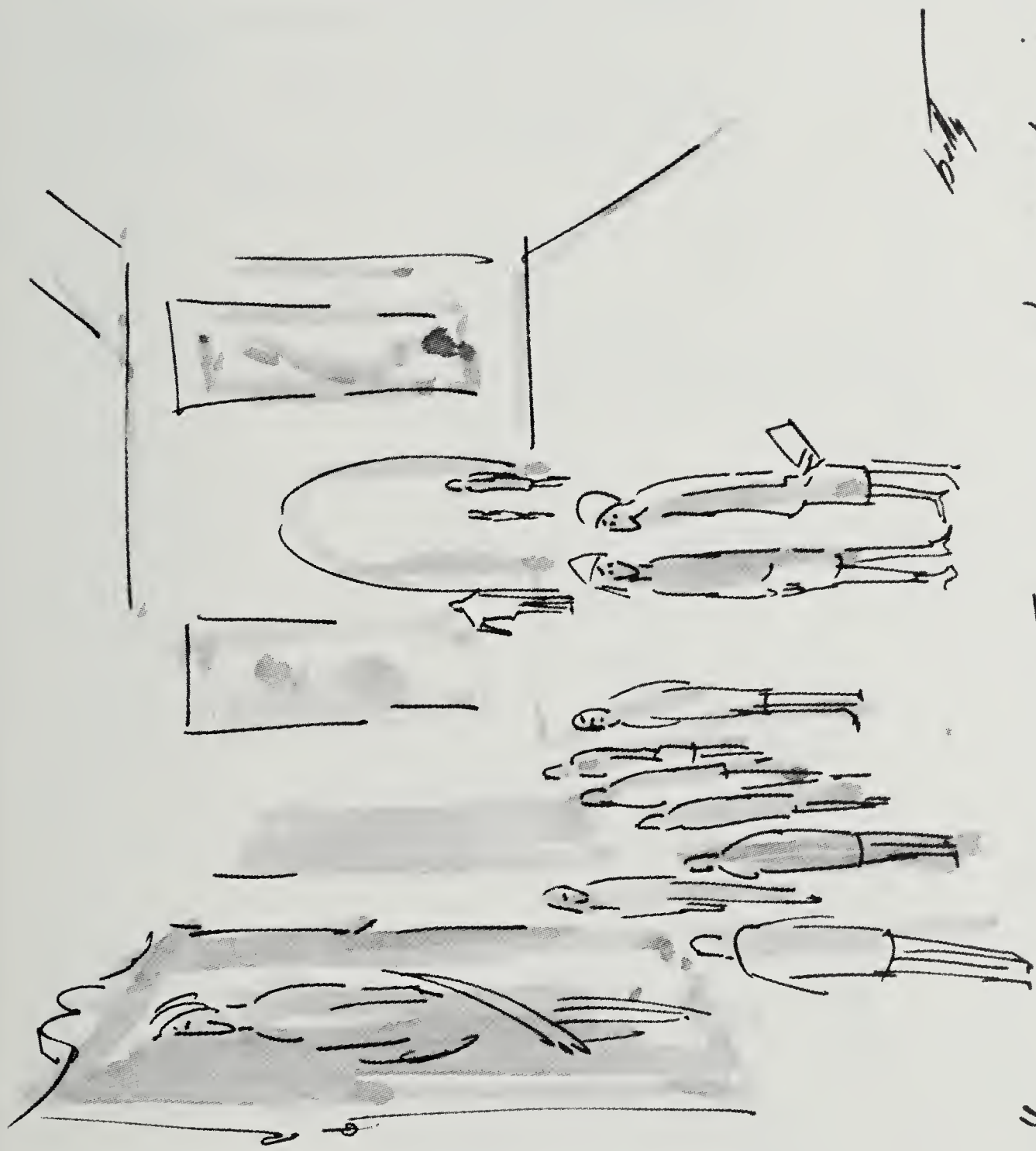
In our next essay on the topic of Transferred Values, we shall examine their rôle in a painting by the artist Matisse, whose work stresses not the expressive aspect, as does Soutine’s, but the decorative.

Heard and Seen

by

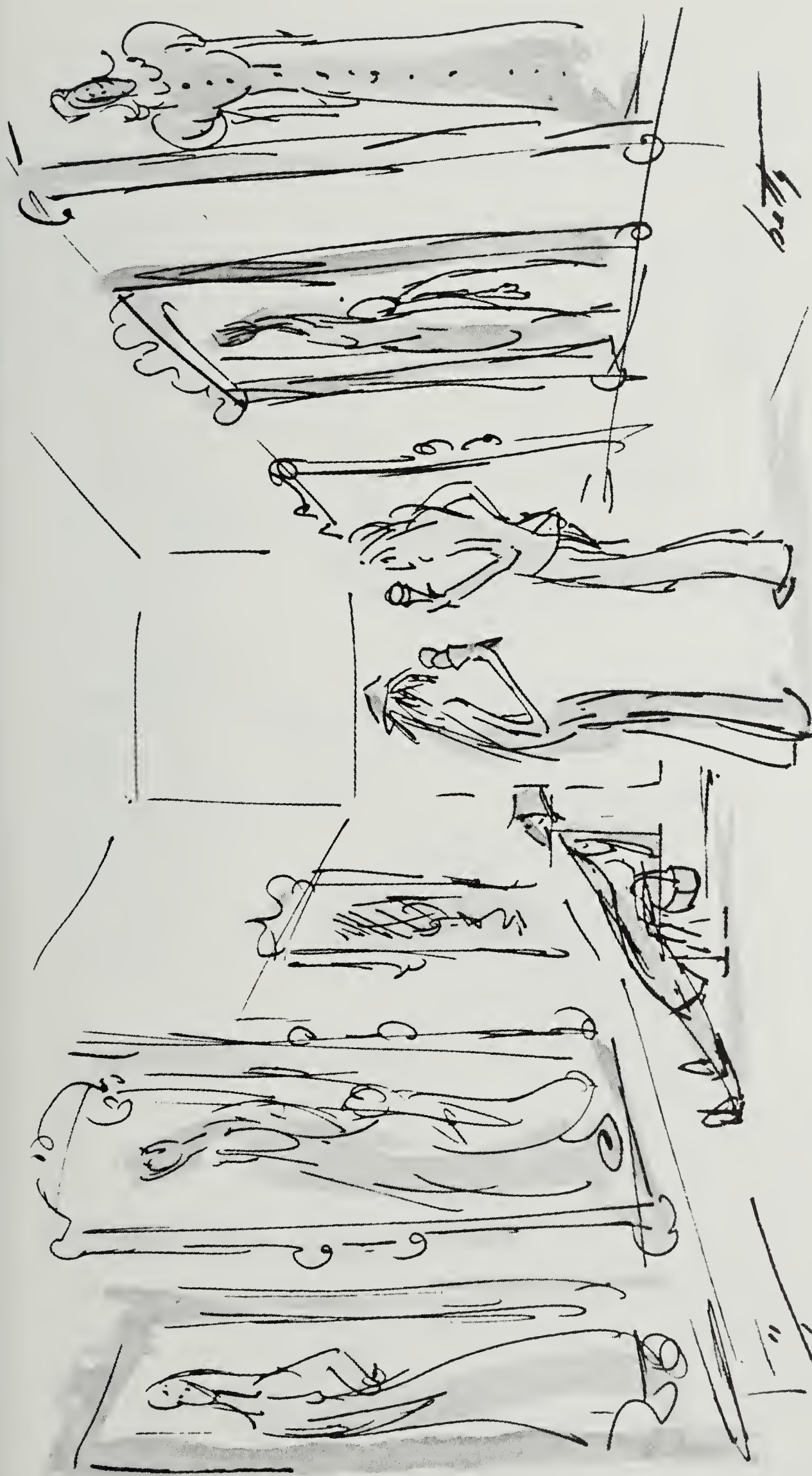
BETTY COLLINS*

* Alumna of The Barnes Foundation Art Department.

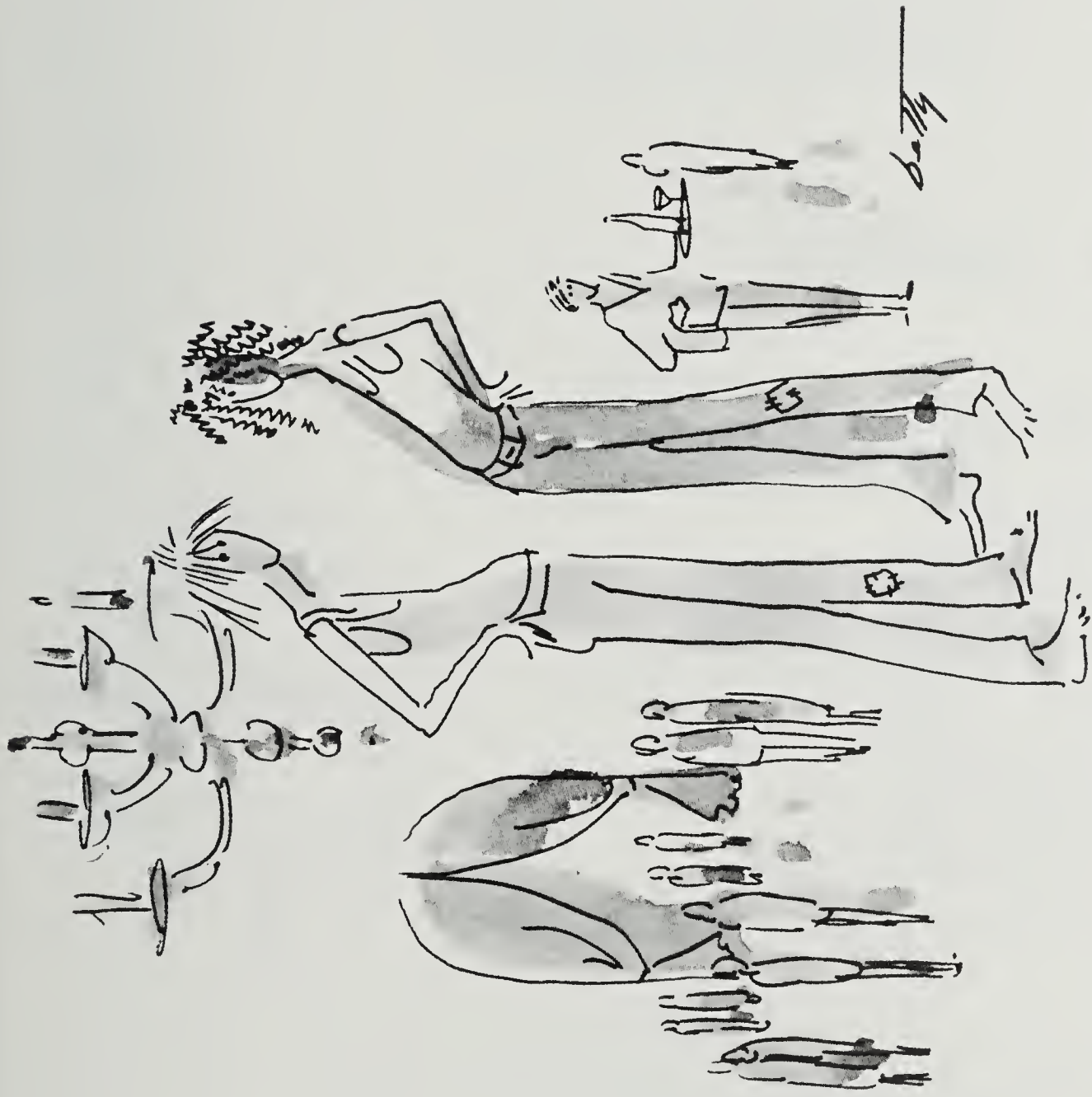


but

"I'd give my right arm . . . for a pair" /
of tennis shoes.

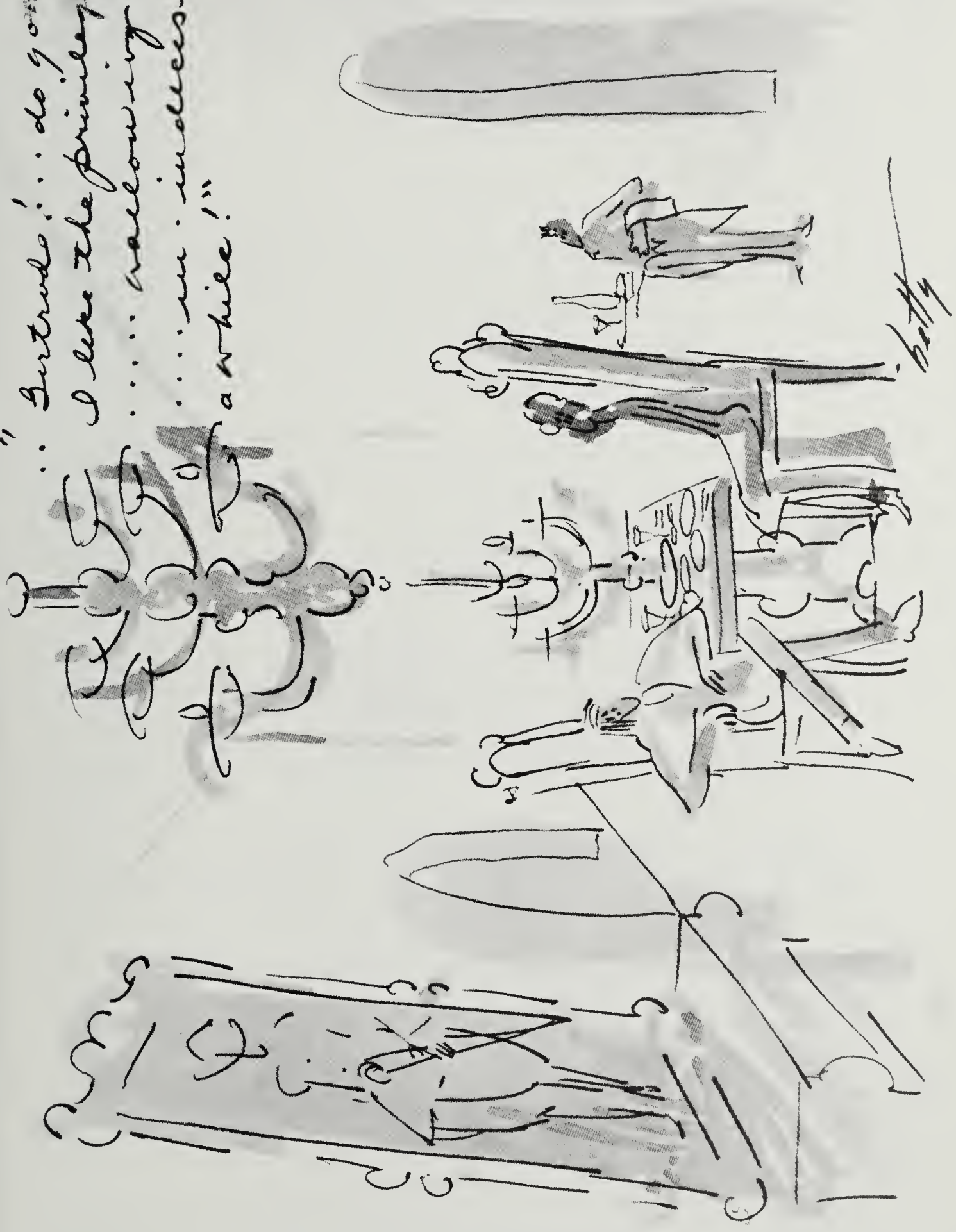


"honestly! american irreverence toward
culture is absolutely pure and unadulterated!"



"... The point is... Do we want to appear.... ostentatious?"

"Gertrude!... do you mind?
I like the privilege of
..... wallowing around
..... in... indecision for
a while!"



. . . In the Persuasions of Our Days

by JAY J. DUGAN*

Even if you don't see in it the meaning that I do, you still have to admit something. It is strange, isn't it? The way it happened, I mean. The timing and everything. There was a message here but who could have recognized it? Until last month, that is, when all the parts fell into place.

For instance, what made him pick that particular plant? A periwinkle. Oh, it's pretty enough in its understated way. But it's—ah, rather undistinguished. Humble, I guess you'd say. There were dozens of others easily available for the purpose. But, no, it had to be periwinkle.

And why should the wind have come up just when it did? And from that direction. He obviously did not anticipate it or he would not have sown the seeds when he did. He's a professional. You wouldn't expect him to make those mistakes.

Now try explaining why that patch headed straight for Steve's windows. And why it stopped when it got there.

The totality of those happenings just doesn't square with the laws of probability. In short, they shouldn't have happened. But they did. That's why I see it all as a wondrous, hopeful sign. Me, the penultimate cynic, the unreconstructed skeptic.

* Alumnus of The Barnes Foundation Art Department.

The improbability of the events on the lawn tells me something else. It says there may be meaningful messages all around us. We may even be awash in them. But we don't see them for what they are. Perhaps we're too caught up in the pedestrian details of just living, surviving. Perhaps we're too busy, too myopic, too other-oriented. And so we become insulated from life's subtleties, some of them rife with strange and wonderful connotations.

After what I saw, I feel I may have rushed past many significant signs in my lifetime without a sideward glance. But not this one. For whatever reason, I seemed primed to be receptive to it. Of course, in grim circumstances like these one seizes upon any promising omen wherever one finds it—or conjures it up himself. For we all grasp avidly for hope, that “tiny thing with feathers that perches in the soul and keeps so many of us warm.”

I realize now that it actually began eight years ago next April when the cherry tree beside the driveway signalled it was in distress, if not *in extremis*. It had always been the most imposing of the trees on the wide lawn, verdant, bountifully leafy. It stood tall and dominant, with a trunk that split halfway up and became two trees. It sat on a hummock encircled by a two-foot high drywall of random native fieldstone.

But it had lost its vitality. Its once shiny bark was dark and scabrous, its trunk craggy, its thick branches hanging heavy, all but denuded of leaves.

Mr. Deverant, who maintains the property, gave it a few injections with a sort of herbaceous Geritol. It responded to a degree, sending out a cascade of new leaves. These came not from its brittle branches but directly out of the trunk.

It continued to cling doggedly to this new thread of life but it never blossomed again. Its bark resumed its erosion, its

healthy color never returning. That's when Mr. Deverant suggested the periwinkle. If we couldn't get color in the tree, he said, at least we could have it around the base. So he hand-sowed the seeds in a six-foot circle.

Hardly had he left for the day when a strong west wind swept in, lifted most of them over the wall and onto the lawn.

The next Spring a mat of tiny lilac-blue flowers appeared beside the wall. They were about six inches high, the width of your fingernail across. Their stems were slender. It would take a hundred to fill your hand.

Gardening, flowers and the like are not my discipline. I know nothing at all about any of that. I doubt that I'd ever seen a periwinkle before they appeared that April. I found it to be a polite, shy little thing, not loud or pushy like some wild Spring flowers. Even its name is humble—the lesser periwinkle.

It stayed through June, gay and cheerful, glistening with honey-like dew in the early rising sun. The flowers closed at night, telescoping into tiny tight buds.

Early the following Spring they broke out of their round cluster beside the wall. They seemed to be pushing an arm in the general direction of the house about thirty feet away. The next year when they returned it became apparent that the entire colony was moving in a determined direction. The advance phalanx, shaped like a rough arrowhead, had moved closer, but still roughly parallel, to the house. Now they were opposite the big curved bay window.

The march continued the fourth year as far as my daughter's bedroom and nearer still to the house. Behind the leaders the mass of the flowers followed obediently in train.

Late winter rains softened the ground early the next April. One morning as I walked out to the end of the driveway for the paper, there were the first timid flowers raising their pale blue heads above the cold matted grass. A few days later, responding to the mysterious urging of their kind, the entire colony had awakened and bloomed.

This time there was no mistaking the line of march. An advance party of periwinkle about six feet across had migrated somewhat closer to the house but obviously pointed toward the bedroom on the corner. Trailing close behind in a roundish mass were the bulk of the flowers from the planting.

It took one more year to finish its journey. And when it did, it stopped. Now two feet from the bushes under the window. The flowers in the body of the arrow moved up around the head, obliterating it. Then they all settled into a proper round bed, as any self-respecting cover of wild flowers would. Other than those under the window of the bedroom where my son, Stephen, slept, there were virtually no periwinkle anywhere on the lawn.

That was two years ago and the bed hasn't moved. It has fattened a bit around the edges. And the color is thicker because new flowers have interlaced the old. But it has marched no more. It settled in, waiting to deliver its message with the consummate patience of the entities of nature.

But there was no one to read it because other events had not yet transpired. They began to appear last November when Steve was in Florida.

The first sign was more an annoyance than a problem. It was the oft-repeated syndrome—the tiny cloud no larger than your hand. Then the gentle April shower that doesn't stop and finally bursts the dam.

That's just what happened; it wouldn't stop. It began as a

mild swelling on his neck. It appeared to be another abscess, of which he'd had several before. But this one was blind. It would mature, a small excision would be made, end of problem.

That's what the doctor in Florida said. That's what the doctor here thought when Steve came up several days later for his nephew's christening. And that, too, was the opinion in the hospital the first five days after it was lanced. We'll treat it with antibiotics, they said, and wait for it to go away. They did but it didn't.

Then the tension set in. And each day it built. A hematologist was called. Another doctor's opinion, then a consultation. Now the possibilities were: a benign tumor, TB, Hodgkin's disease—"and you'd better hope for the benign tumor." There followed node dissection, biopsies, allergy patches, blood tests and more blood tests.

Now low grade fevers appeared. They heightened—103°+. Night sweats. More swelling. Each day the symptoms became more malevolent. Then the throat-grIPPING diagnosis—it was Hodgkin's.

When you recover from the initial knee-buckling shock, you think it's all a mistake. Everyone does with cancer. But it wasn't a mistake. It would not go away.

Next day he was in American Oncologic Hospital. More, many more, tests and "stagings," a euphemism for "how far has it gone." Bone marrow and lymph biopsies, lymph-angiogram, laparotomy, splenectomy—the endless, awe-some ritual.

The next word—Type 3B. Out of 8 you can have one worse stage—but only one.

Cancer has a companion who accompanies him everywhere. His name is terror. You see one, you see both. It matters not who you are.

They both came to our house that day. And with them came that haunting rhetorical question—Why? Why Steve?

It is said that if you have faith, no answer is needed. If you don't, no answer is possible.

But I believe that for many people faced with this dilemma there is a middle ground. It stands somewhere between the comfort of full faith and the resignation of fatalism. For me, at least, it grows out of the totality of my life and experience—all I've seen, felt, have been part of. An unknown philosopher expressed it perfectly for me—

We must find our separate meaning
in the persuasions of our days
Until we meet
that one day—
and learn from God
the meaning of the world.

I have found that reasons, however oblique, for most major events in my life have ultimately revealed themselves. And quite often the most foreboding happenings have spawned the greatest good.

But I was sore pressed at that time to see any redeeming purpose in this one.

When Steve came home to recover after the operation before starting treatment, it wasn't their time so the periwinkle were still cocooned under the cold lawn under his window.

Late one night soon after, I took a long walk to sort things out in my mind. For weeks my stomach had been in tumult as I watched Steve grow steadily weaker. My nerves were vibrating from the long succession of heart-heavy days.

A light snow was falling when I started out. As I trudged

along, shoulders hunched against the wind, I remembered the morning beside his hospital bed when I had to tell Steve he had cancer. I wouldn't allow the doctor to do it. Steve was my son and he should hear it from me.

Long before I said a word, I knew the shattering emotions my words would trigger in him. I could see that terrible parade converging—fear, disbelief, despair, helplessness, anger. I knew it all so well because someone had given me the same paralyzing message four years before.

But the words had to be said and the anguish had to be felt. And it was, deeply.

People, even strangers, are drawn to Steve because he accepts them—and the world—with disarming openness. He exudes a quiet but obvious delight in their presence and pronouncements. But he never intrudes with his own.

When I relayed the grim diagnosis, his world tottered and I could see fear rush in and envelop him. But soon he steadied and his quiet courage and deep spiritual strength seemed to warm the cold, astringent white of the hospital room.

My pride in him welled in my eyes as we talked. After a while he asked questions and he sat pensively as he assessed his predicament. Slowly, gradually, I could sense he took heart because he knew I understood his fears so well. And soon the first faint hope took delicate root as he realized I had been where he was now—and I was alive to share his feelings.

A few days later we talked again and I warned him of desperate times and crushed hopes ahead. But I also assured him that strange and wonderful things would happen. Time would emerge as his most precious possession. He would savor it deeply, relish it. He would sense it slowing down because a flood of intense feelings would cram themselves into it. His awareness would expand

exponentially. He would recognize, as he never had before, the love and tenderness and warm compassion in the simplest actions of his fellow man. His ears would delight to sounds unheard before. And he would see with new eyes, witness tiny dramas unfolding where before there was little to behold but the wind blowing and the grass growing.

As I walked up a long hill I remembered the day several weeks after my own operation when I watched the ants trek across the lawn and march up the sugar maple beside the house. They came in an endless procession, climbing head to tail high up the trunk to a cache of sap in a forked branch. Each syphoned a sip, turned and climbed down, a swaying, rolling accordion of life.

I stood rooted, fascinated at the panorama. And I realized how much of the substance of life I'd overlooked for so long. That marvelous ordered pageantry of the ants and other minor miracles like it must have been repeated countless times in countless places before my unseeing eyes all of my years. But like so many of us I had made an unknowing commitment to the "getting and spending" of which Wordsworth wrote so eloquently. So there had been neither the time nor the sensitivity to behold the awesome patterns of life that teemed around me.

As I approached the warm, welcoming lights of the house I prayed for a different legacy for Steve. I wished him a life brimming with love, tenderness, understanding—and a clear awareness of the near miracles that literally surround us each day that we live.

The snow was falling in great lazy flakes when I returned and I opted for a shortcut across the white-padded lawn. My path took me close to his bedroom. His light was on and he was reading in bed, a frequent practice now that sleep did not come easily for him.

Inches under my heavy boots the periwinkle slept.

With the start of his chemotherapy a heartening new phase set in. We were now on the offensive. No more helpless, baleful watching as the tumor fattened and spread. No more anxious, pain-filled days as the cutting, probing, slicing, sewing surgical procedures went on. No more nervous waiting for test results.

Steve is a strong, broad-shouldered 24-year old. And even though he'd lost 18 pounds to the endless testing and the operation, he tolerated the early treatments with relative ease.

Almost as the first drops of the powerful drugs entered his veins, he began to show positive signs. His appetite returned, the fevers receded markedly and, *mirabile dictu*, the tumor shrunk quickly. The desperately desired remission was under way.

The doctors explained that while the early signs were promising, the travail was not yet over. Steve knew that for now and for many months a quartet of eerie companions would flow through his body. His miles of glandular canals would host a caustic caravan, poisons all—nitrogen mustard, vincristine, prednisone and procarbazine.

Silent, deadly battles would be waged deep inside him hour after hour, day after day. Small thermal flare-ups would mark the battlegrounds. His flesh would warm as the contestants clashed, then cool as they fell back to regroup for still more lethal encounters.

I researched the genealogy, characteristics and pharmacologic effects of the drugs in the medical library of the Institute for Cancer Research. It was easy to see why none would make a marketable mouthwash.

One was nitrogen mustard, the notorious "mustard gas" which was erroneously reputed to have literally eaten the lungs out of many soldiers in World War I. Its actual toxic effect was to destroy human blood cells. Recently cancer

researchers after lengthy experimentation found how to direct its devastation against malignant cells.

The other chemicals were equally anti-social in their behavior. But of the four, vincristine appeared to be the most malevolent. That is, if you can say one executioner is more lethal than another.

Under “Adverse Reactions,” I noted a sampling of the list of 52 possible side-effects a patient might expect to experience from vincristine—

... leukopenia, anemia, thrombopenia, coma, nausea, vomiting, anorexia, stomatitis, diarrhea, constipation, nightmares, hallucinations, tremors, footdrop, fainting, depression, apprehension—.

But despite that frightening litany, vincristine is widely regarded as one of the most efficacious anti-cancer drugs in the oncologic arsenal. It is especially effective in treating Hodgkin’s disease. For that reason I was deeply curious to find out where it came from.

I badgered the librarian and pored through pharmacological textbooks. I chased down cross-references, wrestled with abstruse esoteric terms and strained my meager chemical knowledge.

I was surprised to discover that, unlike the other three, it was not an organic compound spawned in a smoking retort. Instead, it occurred in nature. It was described in one book as an alkaloid of the *vinca* family. That was encouraging, I thought, because *vinca* comes from the Latin word *vincere* meaning “to overcome, to conquer.”

But I wondered how any growing organism could possess such devastating characteristics as vincristine. I pictured it as an ugly, clammy root eking out a slime-covered existence in some gaseous swamp. And I pondered how man

had the prescience to transform it into a life-saving medicine.

One well-thumbed drug encyclopedia reported that it comes from a family of plants known as "dog-bane." It apparently merited that designation because Indians recorded long ago that dogs who succumbed to its aromatic enticements and ate it promptly died.

Finally, one text pinpointed the source of the drug.

When I read where vincristine comes from, I sat stone still. My mind struggled with the significance of the few short words on the page. And a wave of wonder and elation swept through me.

Here's what I read—

Vincristine—a derivative of the common flower—the *lesser periwinkle*.

There will still be anxious periods ahead for Steve. Perhaps many of them. He will regress for periods. He will have to endure painful, debilitating reactions which are the price we pay for assaulting our body with poisons.

But the reverses will be short. And like all pain they will mercifully be soon forgotten.

Mostly he'll fill the days of his young manhood with the magic, irresponsible, irreverent episodes of the young and the strong.

And ultimately the enemy within him will be vanquished.

How do I know? Because when the first soft days of April come, it will be written on the lawn under his window—a lilac-blue message. Anyone can read it.

Reflections On Metaphor and Transferred Values In Poetry and Painting*

by GENE ROCHBERG**

IT was Dr. Albert C. Barnes' remarks on transferred values in his book *The Art in Painting*,† as well as the chapter on transferred values in *The Art of Henri-Matisse*,‡ by Dr. Barnes and Violette de Mazia, that stimulated these reflections on metaphor and transferred values in poetry and painting. In *The Art in Painting*, Dr. Barnes states:

Intermediate between expression and decoration stand what may be called transferred values. These are values which do not belong to an object in its intrinsic nature, but serve to enrich and diversify the perception of it. . . . Such values correspond to the more fanciful types of simile and metaphor in poetry, which do not convey any really enlightening insight into what is described, but embroider it with images which have their own appeal, and so heighten the general effect produced upon the reader.¶

My point of departure, then, is the impact of these values as they arise from the use of symbol, metaphor and allusion.

Transferred values constitute, for me, a major attraction of poetry as a means of expression in the art of literature, and of painting in the world of the visual arts. Devices of

* This essay is based on a talk given by the author to the Seminar of The Barnes Foundation Art Department.

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† Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York, Third Edition, 1937.

‡ The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., pp. 30-42.

¶ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

figurative language, verbal and non-verbal, tend to move the individual beyond the contemplation of the art object itself and its precise manifestation—the canvas covered with paint, the page with words—into depths of meaning and relationships, whether consciously intended by the artist or not. When transferred values occur, their function is to release flights of fancy and a rich use of the imagination.

For the sake of brevity and simplicity, all figures of speech may be subsumed under the heading of metaphor, by which we mean substituting for a literal term or image a unique and dissimilar image whose nature serves to enrich and adorn the original, keeping in mind that, while figurative language tends, by its very nature, to be imprecise, transferred values focus on precise and specific qualities.

A principal metaphor in literature involves personification, or the investment of lifeless objects with the capacities of the living, exemplified in the following poem by Christina Rossetti:

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you,
but when the trees bow down their heads
the wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I,
but when the leaves hang trembling
the wind is passing by.

It is plain that when the trees “bow down their heads,” “when the leaves hang trembling” and when “the wind is passing by,” the leaves, trees, and wind have been personified, and their actions, having been described in human terms, give the wind a particular, understandable, picturesque identity.

A related type of metaphor is created with the use of apostrophe—addressing rhetorically objects and things as though they were human and capable of responding. Keats uses this when he calls the Grecian urn “Sylvan Historian,”*

* From “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” passages of which are quoted elsewhere in the text of this article.

and W. H. Auden, when, in "The Composer,"* he asks music to "pour out your presence."

Poets are especially fond of the use of onomatopoeia—the invention of words whose sounds are their own meanings; this produces a kind of auditory metaphor. Edgar Allen Poe makes his bells ring for us in the poem "The Bells"* with the word "tintinabulation," as well as with the alliteration of "the tale their terror tells," while E.E. Cummings renders the lines of the painter Picabia with his invented composite "tricktrickclickflick-er."†

Hyperbole, which often occurs as metaphor, is a general favorite, since it makes possible limitless exaggeration. Thus, we are not merely inattentive, but "lost in thought" or "a million miles away."

To those devices thus far mentioned—and the list is by no means complete—I shall add only metonymy, by which is meant the use of the name of one thing to stand for another with which it is closely associated or of which it is only a part. Therefore, to ask for only the hand in marriage, or to order all hands on deck, is reasonably to expect the acquiescence of the whole person or persons.

Thus far the examples of metaphor have been relatively simple; now I should like to show a virtuoso poet using metaphor on the highest level. In *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, Shakespeare wants Romeo to tell Juliet that her eyes are like stars, but even more brilliant:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heavens
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.

With these words, transferred values, moving between eyes and stars, heaven and earth, capture the rapture of love

* Passages of this poem are quoted elsewhere in the text of this article.

† From "Songs," passages of which are quoted elsewhere in the text of this article.

and communicate a heightened sense of the romantic experience.

In painting and sculpture, transferred values are akin to metaphor insofar as they too allow for comparisons and endow the pigment-covered surface and the shapes and masses with related attributes. The ceramic-like texture inherent in the surface of some of Matisse's work (*e.g.*, Plate 17), the cauliflower-like appearance of Giotto's trees (*e.g.*, Plate 44), with their foliage in compact clumps, and the tree-like aspect of Giacometti's sculptured figures, with their stiff and fixed attitudes, are all representative of transferred values. They are visual metaphors. When Picasso upended a bicycle seat and handle bars and showed us a bull's head, he offered a fresh view of the terse curving of the projecting handle bar/horns and of the clean simplicity of the shape of the seat/head. Here he came close to the poet's art, almost stepping out of his own. We see immediately that the bicycle seat is like a bull's head and are charmed by the metaphor, even though such a metaphor in words used by a poet might not achieve the same effect.*

The Art of Henri-Matisse, by Albert C. Barnes and Violette de Mazia, contains two paragraphs central to the understanding of transferred values.

We understand anything only in so far as we identify it, place it in a context of familiar meanings; . . . this intellectual apprehension is accompanied by an imaginative or *metaphorical* extension of meaning which imports into the experience of the here and now at least a part of the emotional aura, the heat and glow, of our past sensations and feelings.† [Emphasis mine.]

* An argument could fairly be made that Picasso's piece, in fact, belongs in the "gray zone" between transferred values and imitation, or even trespasses beyond it—*i.e.*, it comes closer to being a literary metaphor, since the object actually becomes a bull's head and loses its identity as a part of a bicycle.

† *Ibid.*, p. 30.

And:

There are in our minds in solution a vast number of emotional attitudes, feelings ready to be reëxcited when the proper stimulus arrives, and more than anything else it is these forms, this residue of experience, which, deeper, fuller and richer than in the mind of the ordinary man, constitute the artist's capital. What is called the magic of the artist resides in his ability *to transfer these values* from one field of experience to another, to attach them to the objects of our common life, and by his imaginative insight make these objects poignant and momentous.* [Emphasis mine.]

Much of what poets do with words is, indeed, comparable to what painters do with paint. Both evoke nature in an almost endless panorama of theme and variations: landscapes, seascapes and the vast open skies. Both present us with people through powerful portraits that reveal intricacies of character or mere anonymity, alone or in groups, running the entire gamut of human emotions and activities. They tell new stories or re-tell old ones of history and myth that continue to command our interest and attention, regardless of the passage of time or the fact of countless re-tellings. There seems to be no limit to the repertoire of expression—both sacred and profane. Among the poets, as among the painters, there are those grand loners who produce in relative isolation and those more gregarious ones who collect in groups to further their ideas or a special approach to their art.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then it is axiomatic that a thousand words can give rise to vistas, scenes, impressions and struggles of endless variety—perhaps beyond the scope of painted images. However, no art is a substitute for another; nor are the arts in competition. Still, it is worth noting that many artists aspire in their work to the condition

* *Ibid.*, p. 31.

of other arts (a striving for transferred values), and frequently non-musicians refer to music as the highest realization of the art form. W. H. Auden makes this point in his poem "The Composer," underlining the areas from which the respective artists draw their raw material:

the painter sketches
A visible world to love or reject;
... the poet fetches
The images out that hurt and connect.

and of the composer's creation:

You alone, alone, O imaginary song,
Are unable to say an existence is wrong,
And pour out your forgiveness like wine.

Language in poetry (as distinct from prose or drama) is sublime in its own right. Nevertheless, poets frequently seek to break down the natural boundaries of language in an effort to arrive at another condition in their work—that of music or painting. Frequently poets are inspired by painters, specific paintings, musicians and specific pieces of music to produce poems which attempt to express in words the characters of these artists or of their works or to project the emotions the poet discovered in his experience of them. In this process, a multiplicity of metaphor and transferred values often emerges. The following list gives a brief sampling of poems which have their genesis in other arts.

W. B. Yeats: "On a Picture of a Black Centaur by
Dulac"
"Leda and the Swan"

John Keats: "On a Picture of Leander"
"Ode on a Grecian Urn"*

Leigh Hunt: "Written Under the Engraving of a
Portrait of Rafael Painted by Himself
When He Was Young"

E.E. Cummings: "Songs"*

Paul Eluard: "Victory of Guernica"
"To Pablo Picasso"

William Ernest Henley: "To James McNeill Whistler"

Max Jacob: "To Modigliani to Prove to Him that I
Am a Poet"

Edna St. Vincent Millay: "On Hearing A Symphony
of Beethoven"

W. H. Auden: "Musée des Beaux Arts"*

"The Model"

By the same token, painters may, on occasion, make use of metaphors that belong more normally to the province of the written or spoken word. An example of this is the metaphor of arrested time, the fixing of a work in a static timelessness, as may be seen in Monet's "Studio Boat" (Plate 53) and Seurat's "Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte" (Plate 23). These images remain eternally suspended. The same general phenomenon of timelessness occurs in some poetry. An example is John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn," which begins with a grand apostrophe to the revered object and ends with the firm and fixed conviction that beauty and truth (read: Great Art) are not changed or eroded by time, even though that is the fate of mortal man.

* Passages from this poem are quoted in the text of this article.

I

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
 What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
 What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
 Are sweeter; and therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
 Not to the sensual ear, but more endear'd
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
 Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare,
 Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
 Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
 She can not fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
 Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair.

• • • • •

V

O attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
 As doth eternity: Cold pastoral!
 When old age shall this generation waste;
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to men, to whom thou sayest,
 “Beauty is truth, truth beauty,”—that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Continuing with poets who used painters for their subjects, we can cite Robert Browning, with particular reference to two of his poems, "Andrea Del Sarto, Called 'The Faultless Painter'" and "Fra Lippo Lippi." These offer outstanding examples of the poet's craft and reveal considerable biographical data about the painters as well.

A contemporary of Robert Browning, John Ruskin, had the reputation of being one of the most astute and original of art critics. Our interest in him at this point stems from his critical essay "On the Pathetic Fallacy" because of the way it relates to the use of metaphor and transferred values. Ruskin warned of the aesthetic dangers inherent in overloading inanimate objects with human attributes and other qualities. He felt this could only lead to over-reaction by viewers or readers, to the detriment of the work of art. A good example of what Ruskin meant is illustrated by a poem of our own time which has enjoyed enormous popularity with the undiscriminating. Its blatant sentimentality and overheated imagery is evident in every line and represents the use of metaphor and transferred values at their nadir. I refer to Joyce Kilmer's "Trees," which has had popularity both as a poem and as the lyrics of a song. Ruskin would have called this poem the product of a mind slightly deranged by excessive emotion and excessive over-reaching in investing the tree with human attributes, no matter how sincerely felt. This is what he terms the "pathetic fallacy."

The concept behind the pathetic fallacy in no way negates the aesthetic legitimacy of metaphors, provided they are within the bounds of good taste and restraint. When, for instance, Dante describes the spirits falling from the bank of Acheron as "dead leaves" that "flutter from a bough," we readily accept the image and respond to it as to a truth—this in contrast to the discomfort, even uneasiness, we feel at the false and forced image of Kilmer's tree that "looks at God all day" or that wears "a nest of robins in her hair."

In the following two poems by Paul Rochberg, the forests of trees are evoked for us in sensitive and deft poetic imagery that, for all its use of metaphors based on human attributes, nowhere rings false:

1.

In forests empty
 Bushes abound
 Robed in mist.

What unseen figures
 Lingered here
 Vanishing as the mist
 Itself, with the dawn

2.

Trees are their shadows
 Lifting, moving creatures
 That look like what they never are
 Turning, bending
 In their stygian dance,
 Trees are a thousand clutching hands,
 A thousand arms, and
 The darkness created

Trees are tongues of angels
 And fiends
 That bless by day
 And curse by night.

A tree is one and many creatures
 Who dance and watch
 And speak . . .

But do not—cannot
 Know.

The rendering of trees in painting is especially rich in its variety and use of visual metaphors and highly susceptible to transferred values. A small but choice selection includes: Blake's "The Archangel Raphael with Adam and Eve" (Plate 52), in which the tree of knowledge in the background drips dangerously and sensuously with fruit, while, in the foreground, Adam and Eve, quietly composed, have clearly not yet eaten the corrupting apple; Giotto's tree (Plate 44), with clusters of dense foliage; Mondrian's tree (Plate 20) of veins, arteries and capillaries—stripped down to the barest essentials of a living organism; Poussin's trees (Plate 22) of fanlike fronds; Jacob van Ruisdael's trees (Plate 24), almost totally integrated into the cloudy sky; Cézanne's

forest (Plate 25), in which the trees are endowed with a feathery quality in sharp contrast to the units which say “rock” with a granite-like solidity—a combination which makes a dramatic contrast of texture that is part of the overall picture meaning. Giacometti’s “The Forest” is an example from sculpture; here people exchange their qualities with trees—man and nature fused. Perhaps none, or only some, of my interpretations of these images coincides with what the reader discovers, but each response must appear as part of a larger truth in a multifaceted vision, as we sense the powerful notion of renewal and, perhaps still more strongly, as we approach the tree in its largest metaphoric sense: the tree of life and the tree of knowledge.

Poetry is often used by poets as a means of describing their own art. Archibald MacLeish’s poem “Ars Poetica”^{*} states its definition as follows:

A poem should be palpable and mute
as a globed fruit

Dumb
As old medallions to the thumb

Silent as the sleeve-worn tone
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,
Memory by memory in the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs

A poem should be equal to
Not true

For all the history of grief
An empty doorway and a maple leaf

For love
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean
But be.

^{*}From the book *NEW AND COLLECTED POEMS* by Archibald MacLeish, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. Copyright © 1976 by Archibald MacLeish.

The decorative, expressive and illustrative aspects of a work of art, factors with which we are familiar in appreciating painting, are readily seen in the images presented in this poem. In fact, MacLeish's wish to exclude meaning from poetry serves to emphasize a poem's function as a non-representative word picture, a treatment of the medium perhaps tantamount to that in painting of eliminating recognizable subject reference.

T. S. Eliot uses the musical title "Quartets" for his poetical discussion of art. On the nature of poetry he writes:

Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die.

Eliot's metaphor is directed towards expanding our notion of the discreteness and permanence of a work of art and its special kind of actuality, which is whole and eternal.

Wallace Stevens, in the following passage from "Of Modern Poetry," expresses still another idea of what a poem should be and do:

It has to be living, to learn the speech of the place.
It has to face the men of the time and to meet
The women of the time.

Stevens' attitude in this poem is diametrically opposed to that of Archibald MacLeish, who only wants his poem to "be," and to that of Eliot, who is more concerned with the quality of the eternal and less with the immediacy of a poem that Stevens emphasizes.

The idea of metamorphosis, mutation and change, holds great fascination, whether it comes from a perception of reality or from the imagination. The possibilities inherent in this idea provide endless material for metaphor and transferred values. Nature has creatures that can change color at will or out of necessity; they may also alter their shapes to conform to whatever they happen to be resting upon. Some creatures are subject to seasonal changes, and some come equipped with bad odors or with fierce and

frightening visages intended for their own protection. We know of ugly larvae that emerge from cocoons as gorgeous winged beings—perhaps the prototypes for those dowdy secretaries of old movies who metamorphosed into ravishing beauties by the simple expedient of removing their eyeglasses.

Such transformations, though literal in nature, when taken up in art, especially literature, can be fashioned into profound and subtly revelatory metaphors. Franz Kafka's story "Metamorphosis" provides one example of what may be done with such an idea. In his tale, the central character changes into a giant cockroach, an insect so repellent he conveys both the ugliness and the utter helplessness of man unable to function at his best.

Obviously, a significant function of metaphor, as of transferred values, is to offer images and ideas to us through one or another of our senses to which it is not factually available, and thereby to make that image or idea knowable on various levels. William Blake, the eighteenth-century English poet, for instance, offered the whole of existence to our sight and touch when he wrote:

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the Palm of your Hand
And Eternity in an Hour.

And did not Oedipus make this point most poignantly when, after he had blinded himself, he said that he was truly "seeing" at last?

Sight, to have maximum value, must be accompanied by understanding, and it must be educated; it is possible for the blind to "see" through understanding while the many-eyed may not see at all. Odilon Redon illustrates this in his "Eyes in the Forest" (Plate 43), where both the "eye" and what it is "seeing" have been converted into metaphors of radiance. We have to take into account the title given here by the painter, since this, perforce, makes for a literary metaphor rather than a transfer of qualities.

The use of the metaphor of the eye, as that of the tree, has produced quantities of evocative poetry. We have already

noted how Shakespeare dealt with the eye; here are two examples from other poets:

The night has a thousand eyes
and the day but one
But the light of a whole life dies
When day is done
(Emily Dickinson)

Cloud and sky
Of night
The eye
of hell
awaits
A dark procession
nightbird berates
(Paul Rochberg)

The world of myths, themselves metaphors, have provided artists of every period with a wealth of subject material. W. H. Auden confronts us with an unusual view of the myth of Icarus in his poem "Musée des Beaux Arts":

About suffering they were never wrong,
The Old Masters; . . .

.

In Breughel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything
turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; . . .
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky

The calamity of Icarus is reduced to a mere pair of legs in Breughel's canvas (Plate 33), and Auden tries to show us the terrible truth of why this can be so.

The myth of Leda and the Swan was treated in icy blues by Cézanne (Plate 13); naïvely conceived, Leda reclines somewhat awkwardly, and we feel unsure that this consti-

tutes a true illustration. Rubens chose to present his "Leda and the Swan" (Plate 15) in rich, warm tones. He locks bird and figure together in an arabesque of swirling volumes, voluptuous in color as well as curve. There is no doubt Rubens understood his Greek mythology and "illustrates" with a grand flourish. Wharton Esherick takes a rather sophisticated and humorous view of the same subject in a startlingly dramatic black-and-white woodcut which he calls "Lead'r" (Plate 12). There is no doubt about eroticism in his work. Yeats, in his "Leda and the Swan,"* releases this eroticism in a torrent of words:

A sudden blow; the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?
How can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.

Being so caught up,
So mastered by the brute bird of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

Kinship among the arts is made evident by the number of poets who have used paintings and artist-painters as a point of departure for their poetry. In the following excerpt from "Songs,"† E.E. Cummings translates the works of Picabia, Matisse, Kandinsky and Cézanne into words.

* From THE COLLECTED POEMS OF W. B. YEATS—quoted by permission of M. B. Yeats, Miss Anne Yeats and Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc.

† Appeared originally in XLI POEMS BY E.E. CUMMINGS, Copyright 1925 and renewed in 1953 by E.E. Cummings—quoted by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation, New York.

II

of my
 soul a street is:
 prettinesses Pic-
 abian tricktrickclickflick-er
 garnished
 of stark Picasso
 throttling trees
 hither
 my soul
 repairs herself with
 prisms of sharp mind

and Matisse rhythms
 to juggle Kandinsky gold-fish

away from the gripping gigantic
 muscles of Cézanne's
 logic,
 oho.
 a street
 there is

where strange birds purr

And, in this selection from "Portraits,"* he interprets Picasso:

III

Picasso
 you give us Things
 which
 bulge: grunting lungs pumped full of sharp think mind

* Ibid.

you make us shrill
presents always
shut in the sumptuous screech of
simplicity

(out of the
black unbunged
Something gushes vaguely a squeak of planes
or

between squeals of
Nothing grabbed with circular shrieking tightness
solid screams whisper.)
Lumberman of The Distinct

your brain's
ax only chops hugest inherent
Trees of Ego, from
whose living and biggest

bodies lopped
of every
prettiness

you hew form truly

Another group of artists explores a special realm in order to beguile us with rare and strange fancies. Many of their works are designed to lead us into areas of terror and nightmare. A random selection of painters in this category includes Dali, Redon, Bosch and Munch. In poetry, the classical examples of this genre come from the works of Edgar Allen Poe and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Following are two well-known passages from Poe's "The Bells" and "The Raven." In the former, four kinds of bells are presented to the reader: silver bells, golden bells, bronze bells and iron bells. It is with the third of these, the bronze or alarum bells, that Poe seeks to stir up visions of a nightmarish terror:

III

Hear the loud alarum bells,
 Brazen bells!
 What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
 In the startled ear of night
 How they scream out their affright!
 Too much horrified to speak
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
 In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor
 Now—now to sit or never,
 By the side of the pale-faced moon.
 Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
 What a tale their terror tells
 Of despair!

And from “The Raven,” these lines in which Poe addresses the bird as though it were an evil and menacing humanoid:

“Prophet!” said I, “Thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
 Whether tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
 Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
 On this home by horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore:
 Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!”
 Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

Without question, each of us has been indelibly influenced by the great imaginations of artists in the way we see and in the words we use to express our perceptions. Phrases like “hope springs eternal in the human breast,” “damn with faint praise,” “just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined” are all memorable metaphors struck off by Alexander Pope in the seventeenth century, but they remain entirely apt today. Such phrases as “the naked truth” or “how sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is to have a thankless child” or “there is a destiny that shapes our ends” are almost

common currency today, even though Shakespeare first wrote them over four hundred years ago. Indeed, throughout history poets have coined a vast treasury of lines that have been so thoroughly absorbed into the language that we have long since forgotten their origins.

I believe a parallel may be drawn with the way we apprehend what we behold in terms of the legacy left us by painters and their traditions. The fields of van Gogh exist not only in the south of France; I have seen them also in the United States and in Japan. I have seen "Renoir women" in unlikely places with the same "shock of recognition" that I experience when I hear themes from music out of their known context. Driving through the Pennsylvania countryside reveals many "live" Corots, as well as scenes directly out of Constable. Strangely enough, though I enjoy ice cream, I find Claes Oldenburg's "Sundae," which simulates the real thing divested of any metaphoric inferences, monumentally repugnant. Nor is the "truth" of the faces of Marilyn Monroe or Jacqueline Kennedy captured in the ostensibly "realistic" portrayals of Andy Warhol. The profound "truth" in art cannot reside in the bleak realism of Oldenburg and Warhol, but in unique and powerful metaphors that generate response, insight, discovery and new understanding.

These reflections on metaphor and transferred values in poetry and painting have considered a large variety of attitudes, styles and works, and yet have, by no means, exhausted the field. The possibilities and pleasures are limitless for those inclined to continue. Kipling's "When Earth's Last Picture is Painted (L'Envoi to 'The Seven Seas')"* uses a painting metaphor which can serve as a short summary of my "reflections." It was his way of ex-

*From A CHOICE OF KIPLING'S VERSE, edited by T. S. Eliot (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1943).

pressing what creative effort can signify to the human spirit.

When Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are
twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the youngest
critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down for an
æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us to work
anew.

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in
a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of
comets' hair.
They shall find real saints to draw from—Magdalene,
Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired
at all!

And only The Master shall praise us, and only The Master
shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work
for fame,
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his
separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as
They are!

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Delacroix

PLATE 2



Raoul Dufy

La Sortie des Six Mètres
—Page 18 fin



Raoul Dufy

Deauville Harbor
—Pages 12–13, 18 fn, 22–23





Jean Dufy

Le Rondpoint
(Present ownership unknown)—Page 14

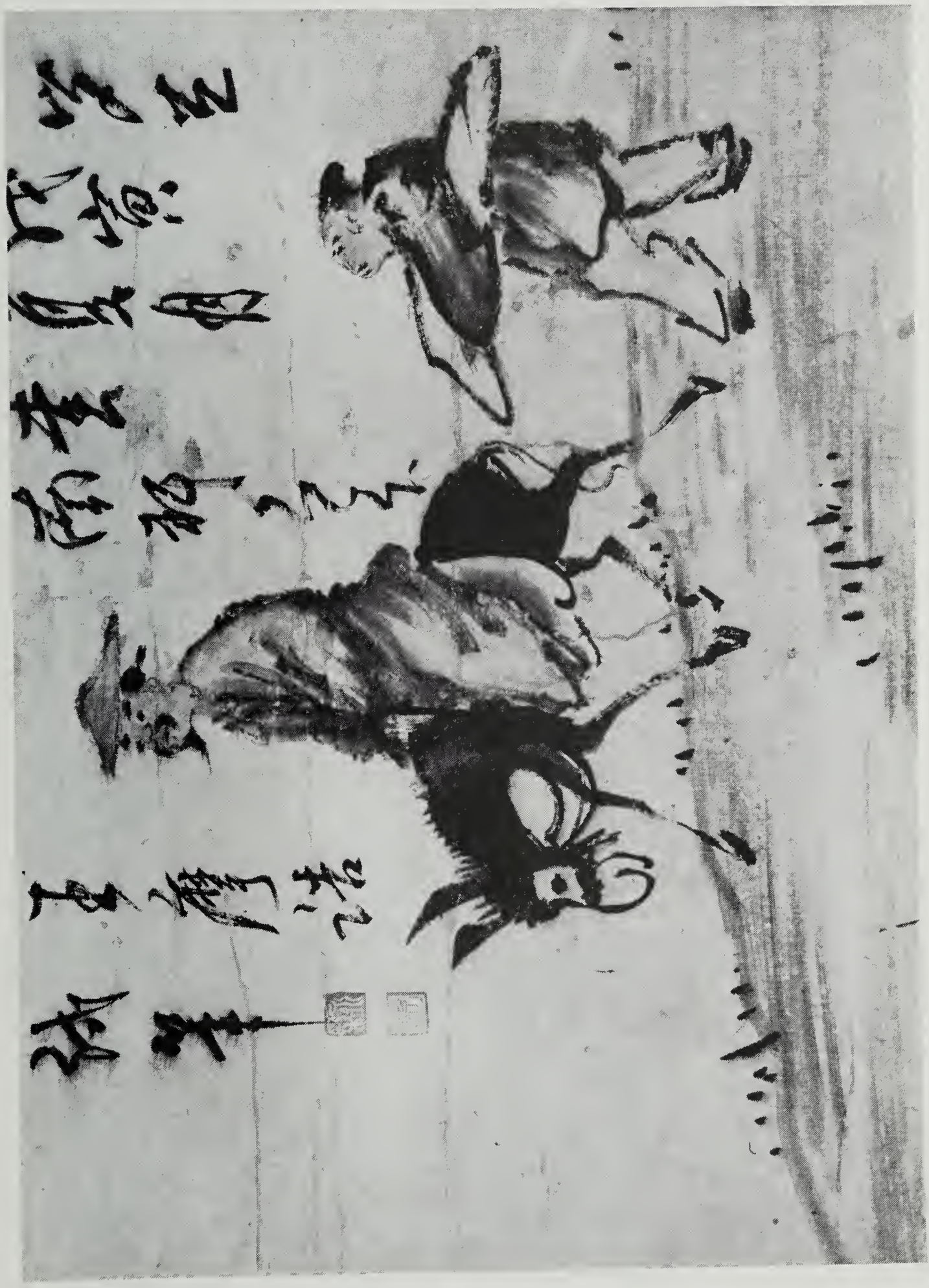


Raoul Dufy



Soutine

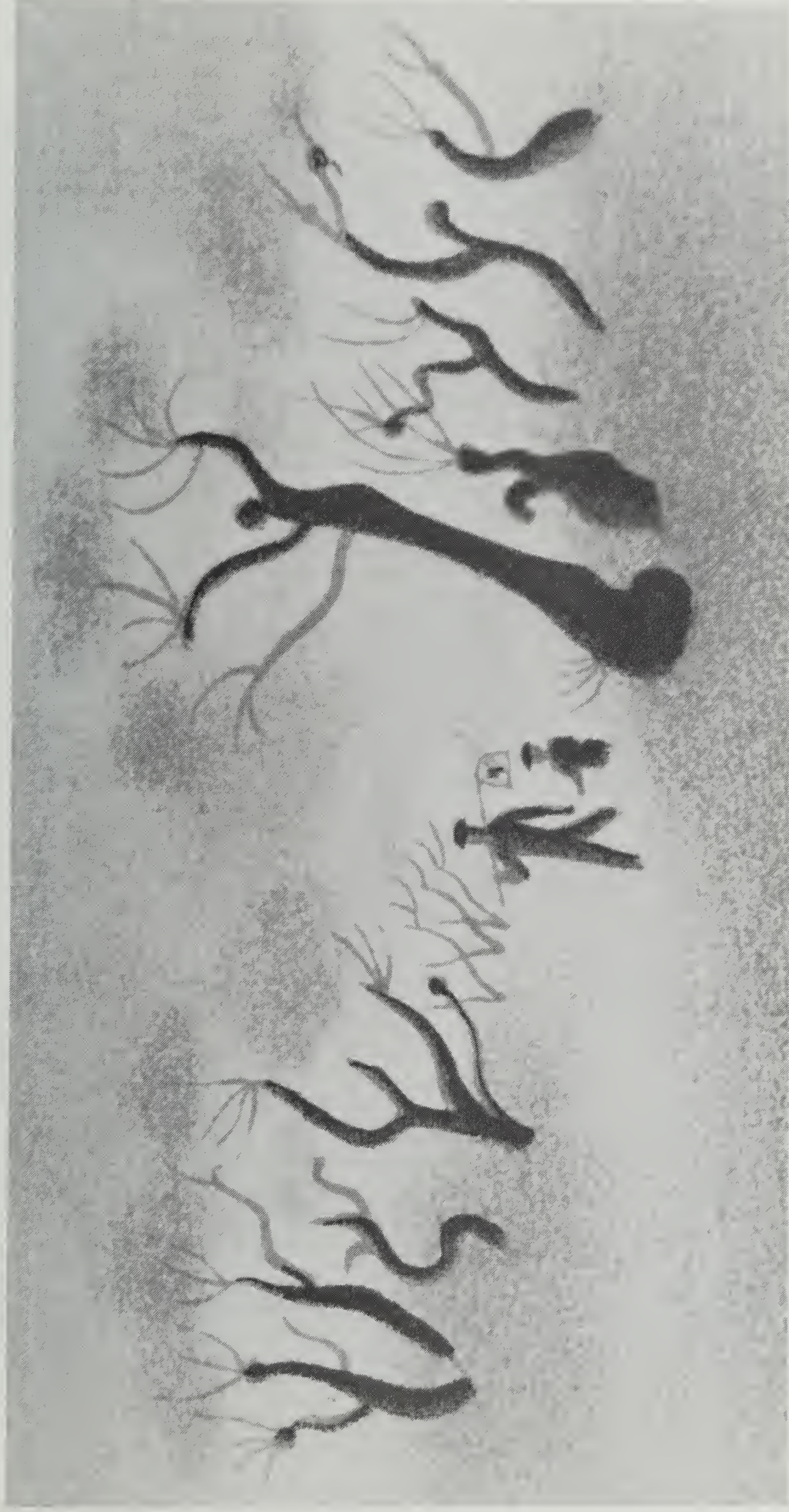




Chinese, Yüan Dynasty

Poet on Mule, with Companion
—Page 13





Jean Hugo

Illustration for Princess Bibesco's *Le Perroquet Vert*
(Editions Jeanne Walter, Paris, 1929)—Page 5





Cézanne

Leda and the Swan
—Pages 14–15, 76–77

PLATE 14



Renoir

Reclining Nude
—Pages 14–15







Matisse





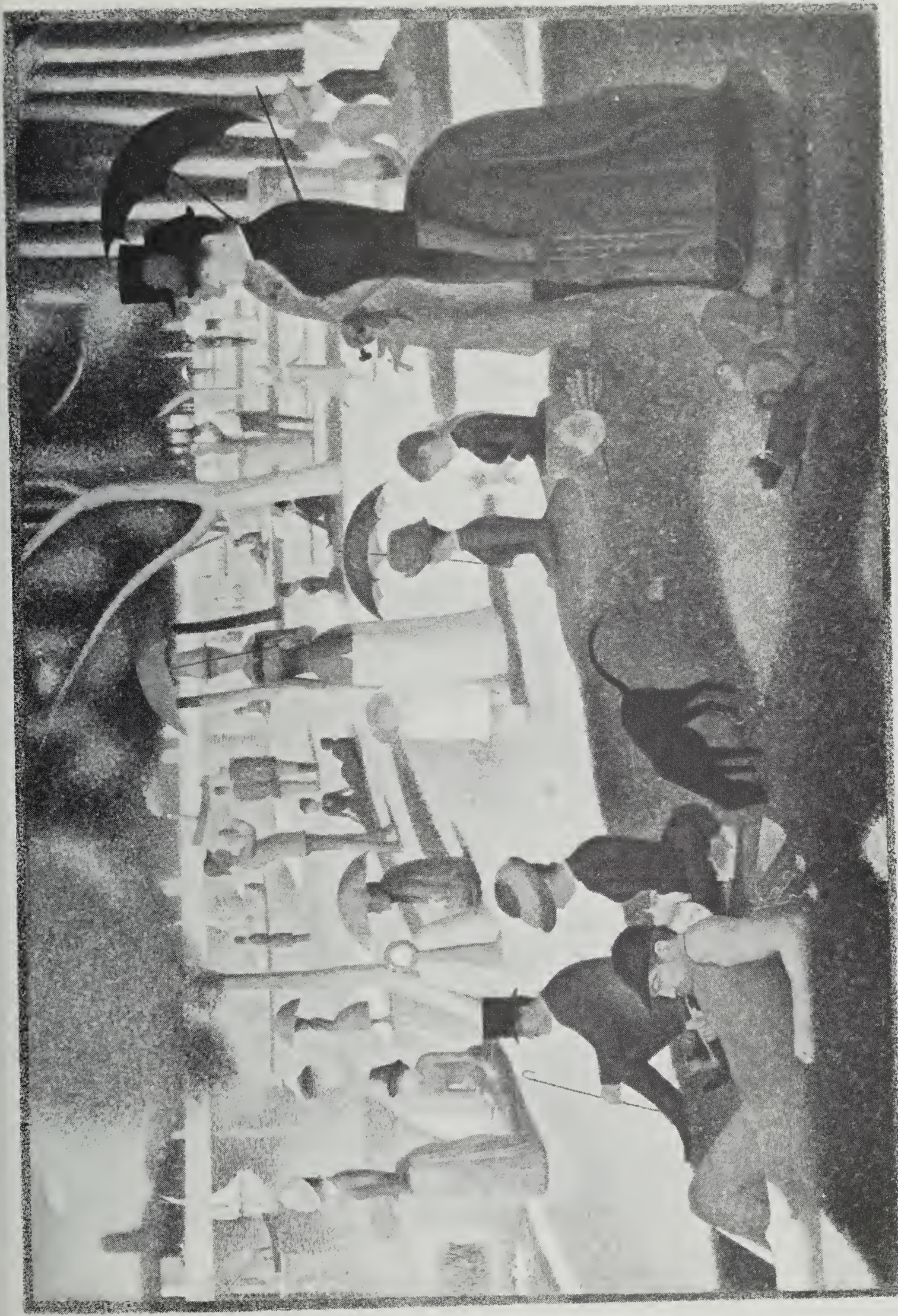
Cézanne

Nudes in Landscape
—Pages 6, 17, 29 fn









Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte
(Collection of The Art Institute of Chicago)—Page 69





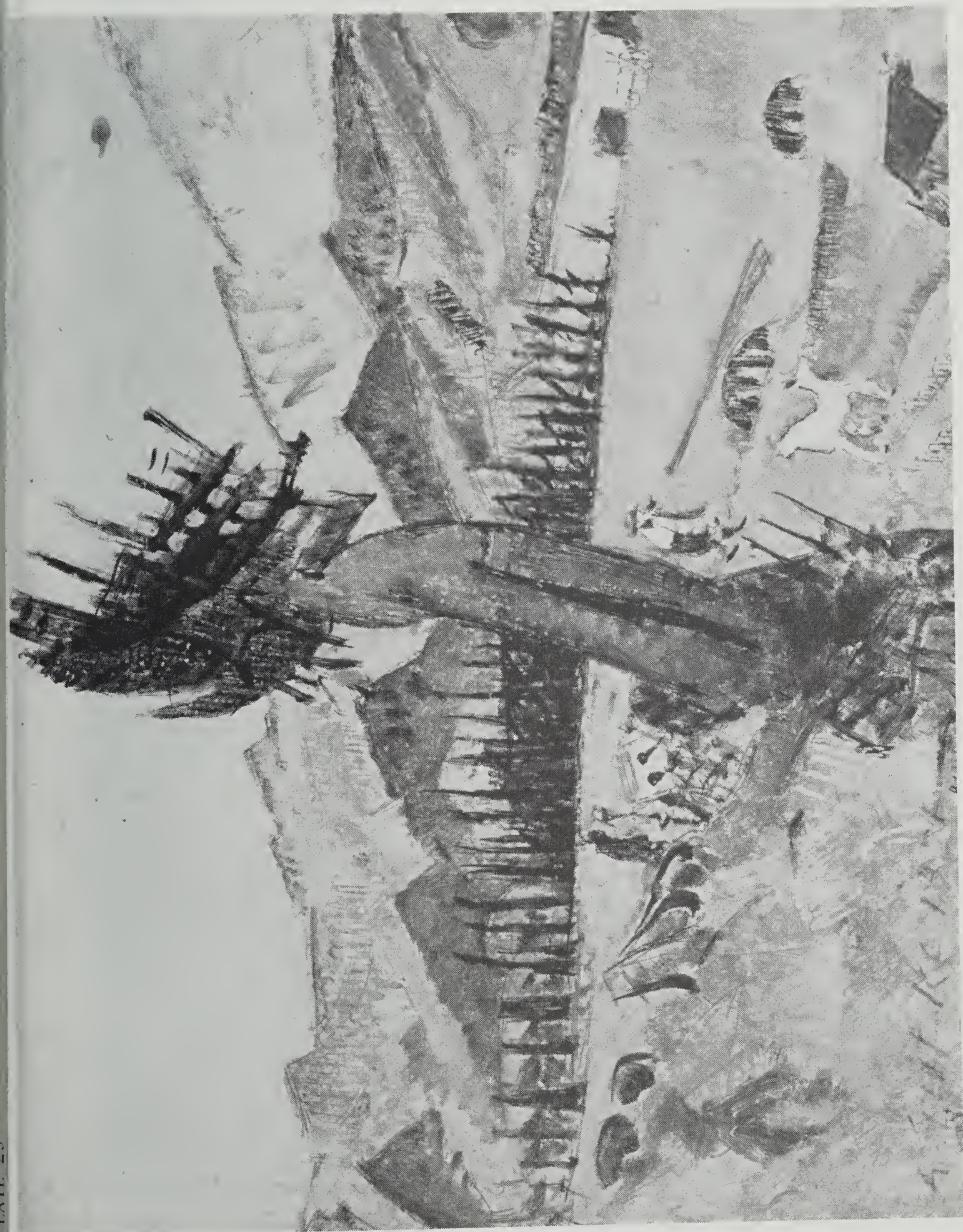
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Rocks in the Forest
(The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer
Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929)—Pages 72–73









Olympia
—Pages 16–17, 16 ft

Gritchenko







John Stewart Curry

Tornado over Kansas
Hackley Art Museum,
Muskegon, Michigan—Page 23



Breughel the Elder

The Fall of Icarus
(Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts, Brussels)—Page 76







Giuseppe Arcimboldo

Winter
(Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)—Page 5



Jacob E. Santa Maria

Gnarled Tree Roots
(Photograph—Privately owned)—Page 5



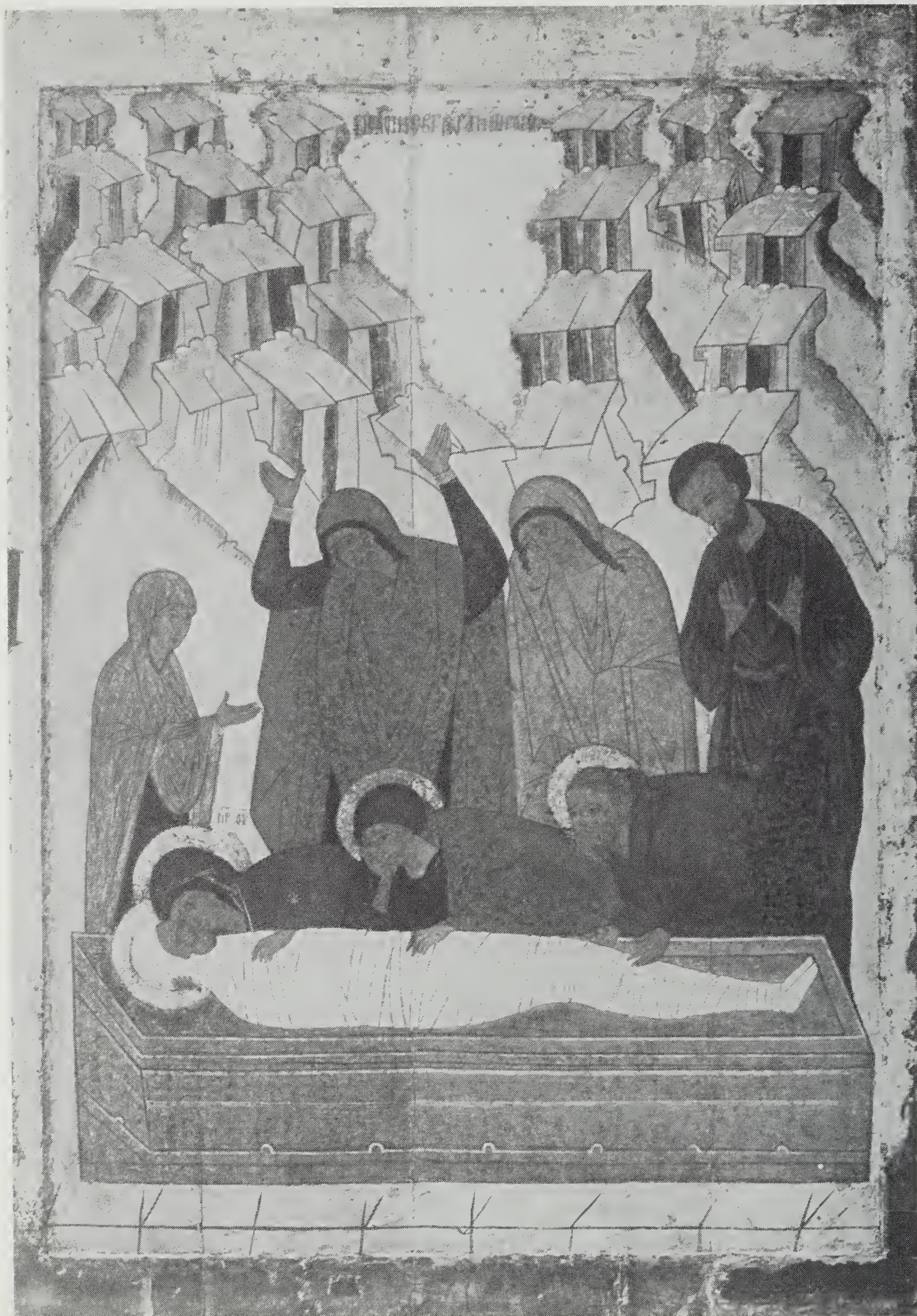
El Greco

Annunciation
—Pages 31–32



Michelangelo

Delphic Sybil
(By courtesy of the Vatican Museum)—Pages 5–6



Russian "Byzantine" Icon
(School of Denys—XVIth century)

Entombment
(Formerly Collection J.S. Ostroukhov—
Present ownership unknown)—Page 7



Gritchenko

Landscape with Goat
—Pages 6–10, 10 ftn, 29 ftn



Gritchenko

Turks at a Café
(Privately owned)—Page 10 ftn



Redon

Eyes in the Forest
(The St. Louis Art Museum—
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Morton D. May)—Page 75



Giotto

St. Francis Blessing the Birds
(Basilica di S. Francesco, Assisi)—Pages 66, 72



Van Gogh

Thatches in the Sunshine [Reminiscence of the North]
—Pages 32–33



Renoir



Renoir

Girl with Hat
—Pages 12, 18 fin



Tintoretto

Two Prophets
—Page 31



Derain

Portrait of a Man
(Present ownership unknown)—Page 27 ftn



Portion of Wall Display at The Barnes Foundation
—Pages 24, 24 ftn



Renoir

Sailor Boy
—Page 18 ftn



William Blake

The Archangel Raphael with Adam and Eve
(Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)—Page 72



Monet

Studio Boat
—Page 69



Greek

Standing Figure
—Page 9 ftn



Athenean, probably of VII century B.C. *Youth of the Apollo Type*
(The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Fletcher Fund, 1932)—Page 9 fin



African

Seated Figure
—Pages 9 ftn, 26



African

Figure
—Pages 8, 9 fn, 33



Greek Octogram from Egypt (obverse)

Bérénice II
(Bibliothèque Nationale—Cabinet des
Médailles, Collection Bestegui—Paris)—Page 9 ftn



Pollaiuolo

Portrait of a Lady
(Museo Poldi-Pezzoli—Milano)—Page 9 ftn



Cézanne

Bibémus Quarry
—Pages 29 ftn, 33, 33 ftn



Utrillo

The Lamp Post
—Pages 29 ftn, 30



Tintoretto

Hercules and Antaeus
(Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford. The
Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin
Sumner Collection)—Pages 25 ftn, 31

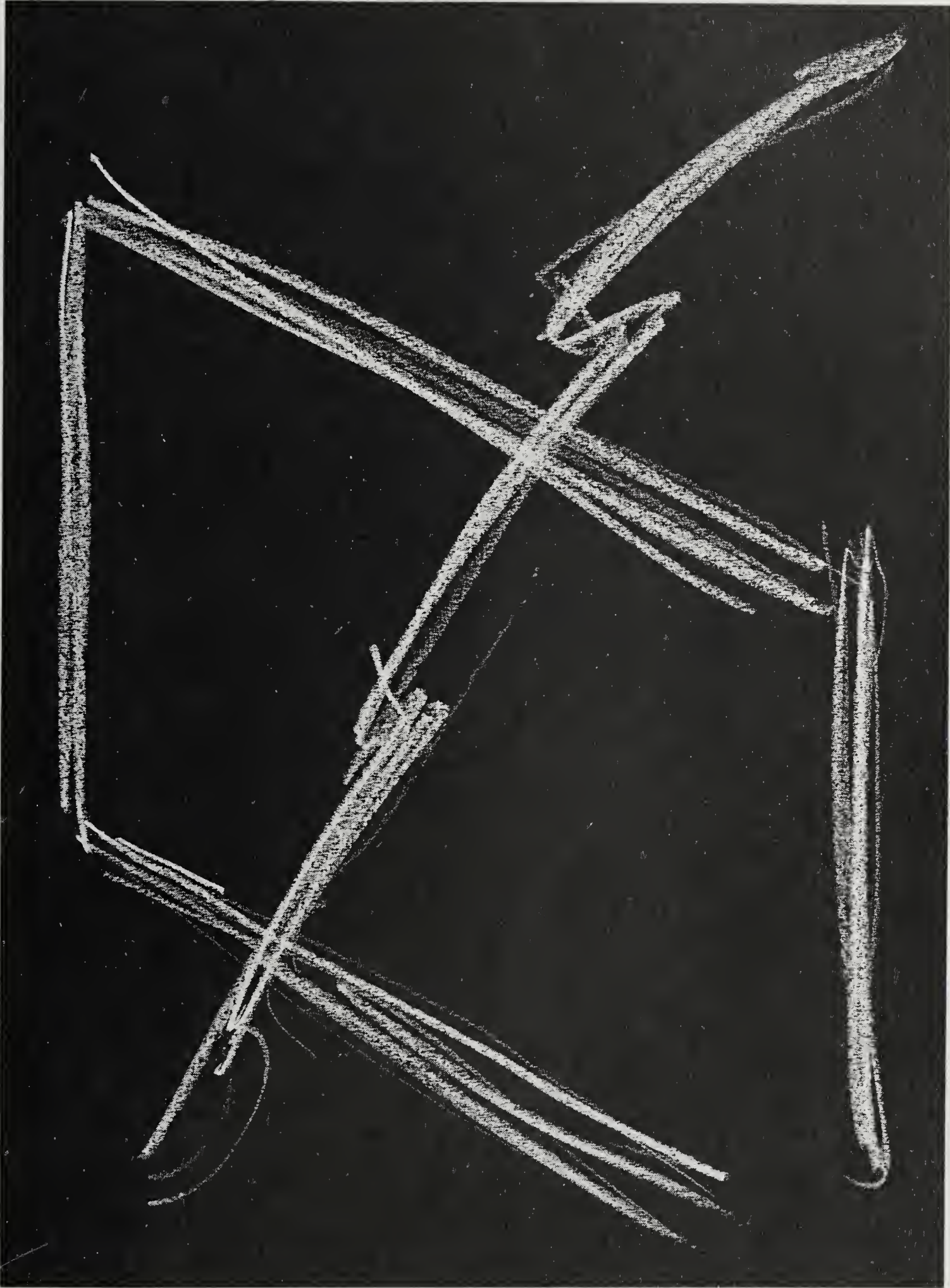


Diagram for Soutine's "Gourdon" (Fold-out Plate 70)

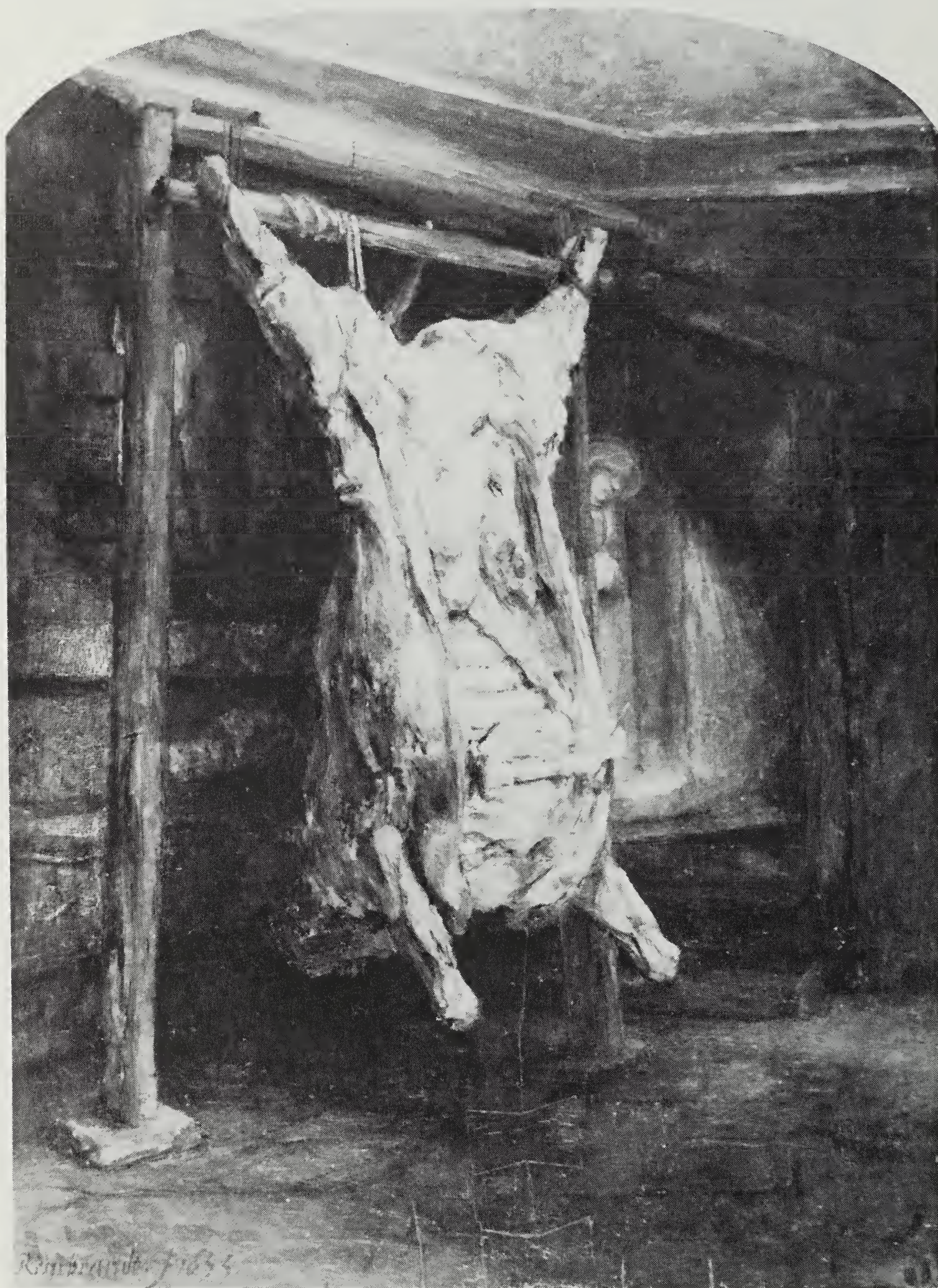


Soutine



Maurice Freedman

Gorges du Loup
(Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Friedman,
New York City—Photograph: courtesy
Midtown Galleries, 11 East 57th Street,
New York, N.Y. 10022)—Page 37



Rembrandt

The Flayed Ox
(Louvre—Photograph: Musées
Nationaux, Paris)—Page 38



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Trees at Gourdon
—Pages 18 ftn, 37–38



Toulouse-Lautrec

Jane Avril au Serpent
(By permission from Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)—Pages 5, 27 ftn

FOLD-OUT



Diagram for tree in Soutine's "Gourdon" (Fold-out Plate 70)



Soutine

Gourdon
—Pages 10–14, 15–35, 37, 38



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Rocks and Trees
—Page 7

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